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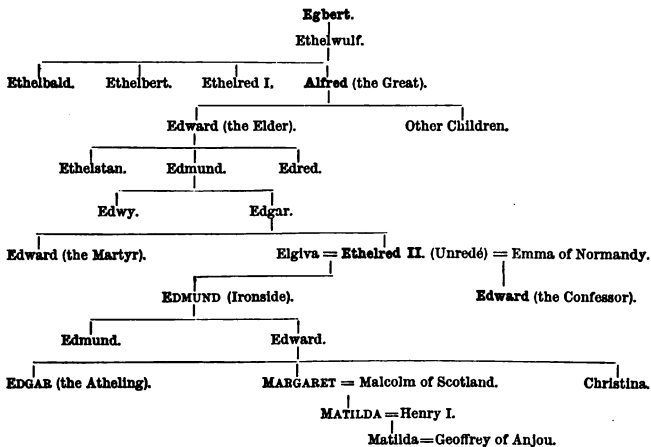


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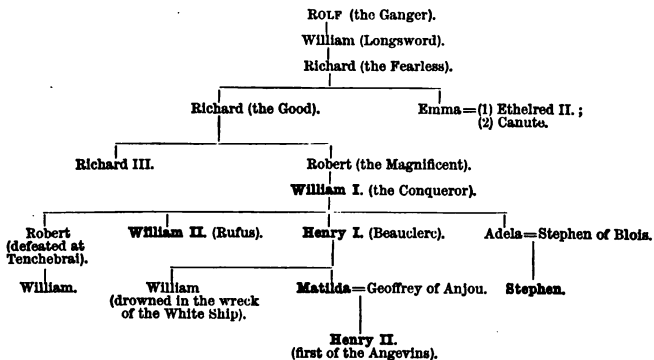
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GENEALOGICAL TABLE OF ENGLISH KINGS, FROM EGBERT TO MATILDA.



GENEALOGICAL TABLE OF THE DUKES OF NORMANDY TO 1154.



F. H. R.

FIRST

HISTORICAL READER.

1.—BRITAIN AND THE BRITONS.—I.

Time: about 60 years before Christ.

1. **Great Britain.**—This country in which we live was not always called England. Many hundred years ago it was called Britain, and the people who lived in it were called Britons. It is now sometimes called **Great Britain**, to mark it off from another Britain, in France, which is called *Brittany*, and the natives of which are called *Bretons*. Traders or merchants from the far East—men who came from the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea—spoke of this island as one of the “Tin Islands,” because they were in the habit of getting tin and copper from Cornwall, and from some of the islands not far from its coast.

2. **The People.**—The Britons were a savage race, and—except on the southern shores of this island—had very few arts, and knew little of people who lived in other countries. In winter they dressed themselves in the

skins of sheep and deer, or wore cloth with a check pattern; in summer they went about with their chests and shoulders bare. When they were going to war, they painted hideous faces and figures on their chests, with a blue paint which they got from a plant called woad,



Early Britons.

in order to strike fear into the hearts of their enemies. As in the case of many other savage races, the women did the work, while the men amused themselves with hunting, or excited themselves with fighting. The women dug the ground, sowed and reaped the scanty crops; and they also spun and dyed the wool, and wove the cloth out

of which the men's loose plaid trousers were made. The chiefs wore gold collars and gold bracelets, which were bought in the sunny land across the sea,—the land within sight of the south and east of this island. That land was, in the time of the Britons, called Gaul. It is now called France.

3. Their Houses.—The Britons lived in huts half buried in the ground, without windows or chimneys. The walls of the huts were formed of rods tied together at the top; and the outside, in shape like a sugar-loaf, was covered with turf and plastered with mud. A cluster of these huts formed a village. Outside the village a paling or stockade was raised, and outside of the paling a ditch was dug. These defended it against the attacks of enemies and wild beasts, of which there were great numbers.

4. The Country.—Great Britain was about two thousand years ago almost one vast dense forest, with here and there wide swamps, broad pools, and dreary marshes. There were openings or glades in many places, and in these openings the Britons planted their villages. Bears, boars, and wolves roamed through the woods, and now and then attacked the Britons; herds of wild deer might be seen glancing with arched necks and graceful antlers through a sunlit glade; while on the banks of the streams, the beaver built his odd dwelling of clay and sticks.

5. Work and Business.—Most of the Britons, especially those in the north, were half savages. But in the south there was a class of Britons who traded with Gaul, and who had some little knowledge of the arts of life. The northern Briton, for many hundreds of years, grew no corn, but lived chiefly on milk and flesh. The milk came from his herds of cattle; the flesh he got by hunting. The southern Britons lived in snug and warm houses; traded

in tin, or in pearls which they got from the oyster ; and wore dresses of fine thick cloth. The Gauls had taught them to till the soil, to grow corn, and to rear cattle. The richer among these Britons walked about in long coats, with gold-headed sticks in their hands, and thought themselves very grand indeed.

6. War.—The Britons, like many other savage and half-savage races, were very fond of war, and the different little tribes were almost always fighting with each other. Their weapons were bows and arrows, spears, and clubs. The chief fighters carried also great broadswords made of bronze or copper, and brass-tipped spears. Some fought on foot, others on horseback, and others in chariots. The wheels of their chariots were armed with scythes, which jutted out, and sweeping round and round as they drove, cut off the legs and feet of their enemies ; and the chariots were drawn by the fierce, swift, and hardy ponies of the island.

sav'-age, wild and ignorant.

ex-cit'-ed, heated and made eager.

stock-ade', a set of stakes fixed in the ground to protect a place.

plaid, a kind of long blanket made of wool.

dense, very thick.

Brittany, a rugged and mountainous country in the west of France. The language spoken there is very like Welsh, Gaelic, and Erse (or Irish).

Mediterranean means *in the middle of the land*, and this sea was so called because it was in the middle of all the land *known* in the world at the time of the Romans.

2.—BRITAIN AND THE BRITONS.—II.

Time : about 60 years before Christ.

1. Their Religion.—The Britons were pagans or heathens in religion. They worshipped the sun, the moon,

and the serpent. They venerated the wren, the hare, and the oak. The plant which grows upon the apple-tree and the oak—the plant which we call the mistletoe—was thought by them to be very holy. On one of the early days of March this plant was cut off the oak on which it was found, by the high priest of the Britons, with a sacred knife, and dropped gently into a snowy cloth held up by four other priests, to prevent it touching the earth and being soiled by it.

2. The Priests of the Britons.—These priests were called Druids. Besides the serpent, the sun, and the moon, they knelt before other dread gods, who were believed to live in the dark woods, and to call now and then for the blood of oxen and even of men. The priests studied the stars; and also went about in search of herbs, which they used in cases of sickness or of wounds. The Arch-Druid was the greatest man among the British people; and the chiefs and kings of all the different tribes were bound to obey him. The Druids governed the country; they made the laws; they proclaimed war or made peace; they were the teachers of the young; they were the doctors of the sick; and all religious rites and sacrifices were entirely in their hands. No king could dare to have his own way, or to set his own will against the will of the chief Druid.

3. British Remains.—There are at present no remains whatever of any British houses or public buildings. Why is this? It is because the Britons do not seem to have used stone or brick or other lasting material in making their houses. Public buildings they did not need. When they met in public, they met in the open air; and the temples they had were rings of large stones, open to the sky. At the present time, scattered up and down this

island of Great Britain, are found the remains of numbers of these temples. They were most often placed on the tops of high hills, or in the middle of far-stretching plains; but they were always open to the blue sky and the free breeze, and they were never roofed in.

4. Stonehenge.—The most striking remains of this kind are the three great rings of huge stones, with an altar in the middle, which go by the name of Stonehenge.¹ They



Stonehenge.

stand on a high part of the wide-spreading Salisbury Plain, in Wiltshire. It is perhaps the oldest piece of work done by man that exists in this island. On this altar and on other altars like it, oxen and even men were put to death with sharp flint knives, and then burnt as sacrifices to their gods. Or, on great days, within the sacred aisle of this open temple, a high cage of

¹ Hangingstone.

wickerwork—made in the shape of a man—was erected, filled with oxen, captives taken in war, persons who had committed crime, and even young children,—set fire to, and burnt as a sacrifice pleasing to the dark dread gods whom the Druids taught the people to worship. While this hideous cruelty was going on, songs in honour of these bloodthirsty gods were chanted by the Druids, harps were played, shouts were raised by the people who stood round, drums were beaten; and this medley of noises drowned the shrieks of the burning victims and the moans of the dying.

ven'-er-at-ed, thought holy.

gov'-erned, ruled.

rites, ceremonies performed in honour

of a god.

sac'-ri-fic-es, offerings to the gods.

e-rect'-ed, set up.

Pagan at first meant a dweller in a *country district*; *Heathen*, a dweller on a *heath*. Christianity was first preached in great cities, and those who lived far from these were the last to hear the message of the Gospel. Both words came in this way to mean *unbeliever*.

THE BRITISH PRIESTS.

1. Sometimes beneath the shades of an old wood,
Whose thick-twined tops the sun's hot beams withstood,
The British priests, under an aged oak,
Took a white bull, ne'er troubled by the yoke,—
And, with an axe of gold, from sacred tree
The mistletoe cut down : with bended knee
They laid it on the unhewn altar there,
And on the breeze there rose the voice of prayer.
2. Hark ! amid the sombre grove
Solemn harpings rise up clear,
Solemn voices meet the ear,
White robes flutter, shadows move,—

As the Druids march around,
 Rustling vestments sweep the ground.—
 Round and round and round they go,
 Through the twilight, through the shade,
 Mount the oak's majestic head,
 And cut the tufted mistletoe.

3. Or, at dawn, the sacred band
 Of Druids on the summit stand
 Of the old and grass-grown mound—
 A band of priests in white array
 To hail the rising lord of day,
 Whose beams are shed around.
 "Lord of day and lord of light!
 Welcome to our longing sight!
 Lord of light and lord of day,
 Blesséd be thy morning ray!"

MASON.

| | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| al'-tar, the stone on which sacrifices were offered. | place to place. |
| som'-bre, gloomy, dark, and dull. | vest'-ment, a long outer robe. |
| flutt'-er, to move about quickly from | ma-jes'-tic, great and grand. |
| | summ'-it, the highest point; the top. |

3.—THE FIRST COMING OF THE ROMANS.

Time: 55 years before Christ.

1. **The Romans.**—For a long time, both before and after the birth of Christ, the greatest and most powerful people on the face of the globe were the Romans. They had the best and the largest armies; they were the richest people; they had the largest empire; they had the most beautiful buildings; they were very wise; they were the

bravest soldiers, the wisest law-makers, and the best road-makers the world ever saw ; they had great and clever writers ; they had great and able generals ; and they had conquered all the nations and peoples on every side of them. Their chief city was Rome,—a city which stands on a narrow yellow river named the Tiber, that runs through the heart of a sunny southern country called Italy. About 55 years before Christ, the Roman Empire held within its arms almost all the countries that lie round the great Mediterranean Sea ; and it is round this sea that in the old times the greatest nations in the world lived and died.

2. Cæsar.—The greatest general the Romans ever had was Julius Cæsar. This general had, a little before the time we are speaking of, conquered the country called Gaul, and made it part of the Roman Empire. Now that the whole of Gaul was conquered, parts of Britain could be seen from parts of the Roman Empire. Coming to the northern shore of that Roman province, he had, one clear day in summer, caught sight of the white chalk-cliffs of the opposite coast, and had asked the Gaulish merchants to tell him about that strange island. He heard that there were pearls and tin and other wealth there ; and he determined to visit the country, conquer it, and make it part of the Roman Empire, should he think it worth the trouble. Besides this, he had found out that the Britons had come over the sea to help the Gauls to fight against him ; and he made up his mind to punish them.

3. The Romans in Sight.—At midnight, on the 25th of August, 55 years B.C., Julius Cæsar set sail from the coast of France with two legions, in eighty high-prowed ships, driven through the waves both by sail and oar. With the first streak of morning light, the Britons, watch-

ing on the high chalk-cliffs of Dover, saw, with rage in their hearts, the curved beaks and the white sails of the advancing ships. They saw the light dance upon polished helmets and gleaming breast-plates, on swords and spears, and on the bronze and silver eagles which formed the standards of the approaching foe. Messages were sent round to all the chiefs; and now the cliffs were covered with Britons, and bristling with British spears; the horse swarmed on the pebbly shore, the war-chariots raced furiously along the top of the cliffs, and the quiet morning air was rent with the war-cries and shouts of the Britons.

4. The Failure.—The water close in shore was so deep, the enemy so numerous and active, and the cliffs so high, that Cæsar did not dare to attempt a landing in the face of this strong and fearless body of men. He ordered the fleet to stand off from the shore, and to make for Deal, a place with a low beach, which stands about twenty miles farther up the coast.

5. The Landing.—But here the Britons were once more ready to meet them face to face. And once more the Romans had to face the British horse and foot, and the ugly war-chariots, and to try to land in the presence of a fierce and well-armed foe. They stopped and hesitated, and seemed to shrink. There were the dangers of the sea, the dangers from the darts and spears of the Britons, and the difficulty of fighting in the water—which these inland warriors were not at all used to. At last the standard-bearer of the Tenth Legion could bear the delay no longer. He jumped into the sea, shouting, "Follow me, men of the Tenth Legion, unless you wish to see your eagle in the hands of the enemy!" This would *have* been a terrible disgrace, which would have left a

deep stain on the courage of the Legion. The Roman soldiers had never yet known defeat; and it was not to be thought of that they should first learn to know it at the hands of a horde of island savages. The soldiers jumped after him into the water, fought their way to the shore, formed upon the dry land; and, after very hard fighting, drove back and put to rout the fierce bands of British warriors.

6. The Departure.—Cæsar had not come with any intention of conquering the island with the small army he had with him at this time. He merely wanted to see what kind of country it was, and what kind of people lived in it. Besides, it was autumn; and his army could not have lived there—without warmer clothing—through the cold winter. Accordingly, after a stay of nearly three weeks in the island, he went back to Gaul with his ships and men. The Romans left in the dead of night. When, in the early morning, the Britons came and looked for them, they found the camp empty and the enemy gone.

em'-pire, a number of countries or lands ruled over by an emperor.
gen'-er-al, the chief commander of an army, or of part of an army.
prow, the forepart of a ship.
pol'-ished, smooth and shining.

swarmed, crowded closely together.
at-tempt', to try.
hes'-i-tat-ed, were slow in making up their minds.
de-lay', hindrance; putting off.
in-ten'-tion, purpose.

Before Christ. All Christian nations measure time from the birth of Christ. They count backwards to events which happened before it. Events which happened after the birth of Christ are dated thus, A.D., which means *Anno Domini*—that is, In the year of Our Lord.

Legion, a division of the Roman army. It varied in size, ranging from 4500 to 6000 men; and it included horse-soldiers as well as foot-soldiers.

Beaks. The prows of the Roman ships were sharp, and often shaped like the beaks of eagles and other birds.

Standard-bearer. Instead of flags, the Romans had at the head of their armies figures of eagles in bronze or silver. These were the standards, which the men had to keep near and fight beside; and the officer who carried them was called the *standard-bearer*.



4.—THE SECOND COMING OF THE ROMANS.

54 B.C.

1. **The Return.**—Cæsar left the Britons to themselves for about nine months. He came back in May of the following year (B.C. 54), and again landed at Deal. This time he had a fleet of 800 ships, an army of about 25,000 foot and 2000 horse; and the narrow channel between Gaul and Britain seemed to be covered with ships, thick with sails, and rough with the splashing of oars. But even with so large an army the work in front of him was yet harder than before. The Britons had united their scattered armies, and chosen for their leader a king called Caswallon or Cassiveláun (in the Roman language, Cassivelaunus), who posted his army on a height at some distance from the sea, between the coast and the river Thames.

2. **The First Battle.**—Cæsar had sent out a strong

foraging party—consisting of three legions and all the cavalry he had ; and this force was suddenly attacked by the Britons. But the steady and disciplined charge of the Roman soldiers broke and scattered the British bands ; and the British army, utterly unable to hold its ground, was pressed back, broke into fragments, and fled.

3. Second Stand of the Britons.—Cassiveláun collected his scattered soldiers, marched to a point farther north, and drew up his army behind the river Thames—that is, on its north bank. There was only one ford known to the Romans—a ford near Chertsey, a place not far from Windsor. But the British forces had fortified the banks with sharp oak stakes sticking outward, and fronting the coming enemy ; and they had also very cleverly driven other sharp stakes into the bed of the river under the water. Nothing, however, could withstand the ardour of the Romans. The water was up to their necks ; nothing for a time could be seen of them but a swarm of glittering helmets ; British darts hurtled in crowds through the air ; but, despite every obstacle, the Romans reached the bank in force, drove back and broke up the army of the Britons.

4. The Romans across the Thames.—After crossing the river, Cæsar's next care was to march on the rude capital of Cassiveláun—that stood in the forest which covered that part of Britain now known as Hertfordshire. It was a very strong place. It was fortified by a paling or stockade, and a wall of clay ; and, outside both, at all the points that might be looked upon as weak, there was a barricade of trunks of trees with unlopped branches. Cæsar attacked this stockade on two sides at once. He quickly cut his way in ; and the troops of the British king fled from the town on the northern side.

5. Cæsar's Final Departure.—The Britons at length begged for peace; and Cæsar, who had other work to do, was quite ready to grant it. He fixed the amount of yearly tribute; he ordered the Britons to give him hostages; he collected a quantity of pearls; and then he went away, quite contented, back to his own country.

6. Cæsar's Death.—All this account of the two first attempts of the Romans to gain a footing in Britain is written by Cæsar himself. He was, as has been said, the greatest general the Romans ever had, and one of their best writers also. In the words of a great poet,

“ He was a fellow
Who could both write and fight, and in both was equally skilful ! ”

He was born exactly 100 years before Christ; and he died at the age of fifty-six, in the year 44 B.C. He was put to death by the daggers of a number of men, some of them his old friends, who were afraid that he was trying to make himself a king.

post'-ed, placed.

for'-ag-ing, going about and taking by force, or otherwise, food for men, horses, and cattle.

dis'-cip-lined, well and carefully trained.

col-lect'-ed, gathered together.

for'-ti-fied, made strong.

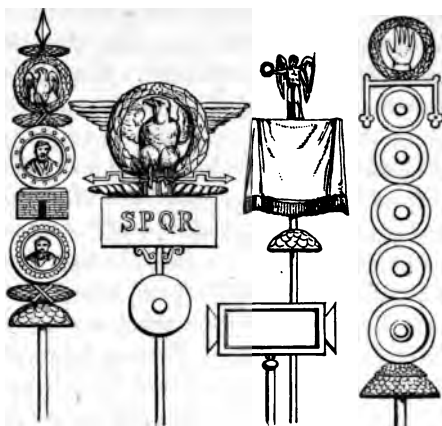
ar'-dour, eagerness.

bar'-ri-cade, a barrier of wood, stones, or turf, raised in haste to keep off an attack.

frag'-ment, a piece broken off.

Hostage. When a treaty was made, a number of men was often given up by the one party to the other; and if the party giving the hostages broke the treaty, the hostages were put to death.

Great Poet. Longfellow, in “ Miles Standish.”



Roman Standards.

5.—THE THIRD COMING OF THE ROMANS.

3 A.D.

1. **The Emperor Claudius.**—Soon after the murder of Cæsar, the Romans took to themselves a head-man or chief of the State; and those who filled this chief place in Rome were from that time called Emperors. The Britons were left alone and unharmed for nearly a hundred years. Still, the Romans were always ready and willing to make war in any part of the world, and to bring other peoples under their power. In the year 43 the Emperor Claudius took it into his head that he would like to subdue the island of Britain, and make it part of the Roman Empire; and he accordingly sent an army of 40,000 men, under two excellent generals, to overrun the country. One of these generals was called Vespasian—a famous soldier, who was afterwards himself made emperor. He

was the father of the great Roman general and emperor, Titus, who took the city of Jerusalem, razed it to the ground, and sowed the soil with salt. Claudius followed his generals soon after, landed in Britain, remained in the island sixteen days, went back to Rome, took the title of *Britannicus*, and tried to make himself and other people believe that he had really conquered the whole country.

2. Caradoc.—The commander-in-chief chosen by the British tribes to meet this new Roman army was a chieftain called Caradoc—or, in the Latin speech, Caractacus. He kept the Romans fighting for about seven years. He fought every inch of ground. He was, however, driven back—step by step—until he found himself among the rugged mountains of Wales. The soft copper swords of the Britons were hacked and bent, and their little wicker-work shields hewn to pieces, by the short, heavy steel sword of the trained Roman troops. Caractacus was defeated and fled. He fled to the house of his mother-in-law, who sold him to the Roman general. He was thus made prisoner, and was soon after sent on to Rome.

3. The Triumph.—When a Roman general obtained a great victory, the Senate or Parliament of Rome agreed that he should have a public triumph. The victorious general was drawn in a splendid chariot, decked with flowers, through the chief streets to the temples of the gods, where he offered thanks for his victory. His troops followed him—their helmets and spears hung with garlands of flowers and laurel leaves; the spoils taken in the war were piled in other chariots and waggons; and the weeping captives, in chains, were obliged to march after the chariot of the conqueror. This was to show to the Roman people what had been done to the conquered nation, and how great riches had been taken as spoil.

Shouts and hurrahs rent the air ; and the Romans rejoiced and threw up their caps as the general passed in his triumphal chariot. After the procession the captive general or king was put to death.

4. The Saying of Caradoc.—Such was to have been the fate of the noble British soldier, Caradoc. He had to march after the triumphal chariot, to bear the hard unfeeling gaze of the crowds, and to listen to the shouts of the Roman rabble. But he marched steadily on, head erect, his blue eyes clear and undimmed with tears, and wondering in his own mind at the grandeur of the buildings of the greatest city in the world. When he saw the splendid houses, the long and wide streets lined with temples of whitest marble, the purple robes, the gold and jewels of the Roman nobles, he is said to have exclaimed : “How can these people envy me my little mud cottage and my few fields so far away in our poor cold northern Britain !”

5. The Result.—When he was brought before the emperor, he saw Claudius sitting, in a robe of gold and purple, upon an ivory throne. But Claudius, though no great soldier, at once felt that he was in the presence of a noble spirit. He was struck by the calm look and noble bearing of the Briton, and he nobly presented him with his life and freedom.

sub-due', to conquer or bring under the power of.

ex'-cel-lent, very good indeed.

fam'-ous, much talked of by many people in many places.

razed, destroyed and laid level with the ground.

ti'-tle, a name given in honour of some

great deed.

chief'-tain, the head of a clan or body of men.

cap'-tive, a prisoner.

rab'-ble, a rough noisy mob.

splen'-did, large and beautiful ; very grand.

calm, quiet, still, and untroubled.

Emperor. In Rome the first meaning of Emperor (*Imperātor*) was *commander of the army* ; and as the chief commander became also ruler of the people, the word *emperor* came to mean a *ruler over an empire*. Now and then

a Roman general would *delete* or *wipe out* a city. He would order every building to be pulled down; and that no trace of the city might be seen, a plough was passed over it. Salt was also sown, as a sign that the ground should for ever be left barren.

Britannicus. Roman generals who had conquered countries or peoples were in the habit of taking as a title a word formed from the name of the conquered country. Thus we find such titles as *Africānus* (from Africa); *Germanicus* (from Germany); and so on.



CARADOC AT ROME.

51.

1. Before proud Rome's imperial throne,
In stern unconquered mood,
As if the triumph were his own,
Th' undaunted captive stood.
None, to have seen his free-born air,
Had fancied him a captive there.

2. Through the long crowded streets of Rome
 He marched with stately tread,—
Far from his misty island home
 That day in triumph led,—
Yet calm his mien, unbent his knee,
Undimmed his eye, his aspect free.
3. And now he stood, with brow serene,
 Where slaves might prostrate fall,
Bearing a Briton's manly mien
 In Cæsar's palace hall ;
Claiming with firm-knit brow and cheek,
The liberty, even there, to speak.
4. Deep stillness fell on all the crowd,
 From Claudius on his throne
Down to the meanest slave that bowed
 At the imperial throne ;
Silent his fellow-captives' grief
As fearless spoke the Island Chief :—
5. "Think not, thou eagle Lord of Rome,
 And master of the world,
Though victory's banner o'er thy dome
 In triumph be unfurled,
I would address thee as thy slave,
But—as the bold should greet the brave !
6. "Rome, with her palaces and towers,
 By us unwished, unreft,
Her homely huts and woodland bowers
 To Britain might have left ;—
Worthless to you their wealth might be,
But dear to us, for they were free !

7. "Now I have spoken, do thy will ;
 Be life or death my lot,
 Since Britain's throne no more I fill—
 To me it matters not.
 My fame is clear ; but on *my* fate
 Thy glory or thy shame must wait."
8. He ceased : from all around upsprung
 A murmur of applause ;
 For well had Truth and Freedom's tongue
 Maintained their holy cause.
 The conqueror was the captive then ;—
 He bade the slave be free again !

BERNARD BARTON.

im-pe'-ri-al, belonging to an emperor.
stern, harsh and cold in manner.
un-daunt'-ed, fearless.
state'-ly, grand ; in a lofty manner.
mien, manner ; bearing ; way of conducting one's self.
pros'-trate, lying stretched upon the ground.
grief, sorrow.

bann'-er, a flag or any other mark for soldiers to gather round.
dome, a round roof of a building, in shape like a half ball.
un-furled', spread out ; unfolded.
un-reft', not plundered.
ap-plause', praise expressed by clapping of hands.
main-tained', kept up ; supported.

6.—THE ROMANS SETTLED IN BRITAIN.—I.

43 to 410.

1. **The Long War.**—The Romans took seven years to subdue Caradoc ; but the long period of forty-one years was required to make the island their own. They had not only to take one town after another, to break up one army after another, but they had to drive strong and lastingly built roads through a land of dense forest and

widespread marsh. They marched and fought—fighting and marching every day—as far as Wales on the west, and up to the Grampians on the north. A Roman governor called Agricola defeated a chief named Galgacus in a pitched battle at the foot of the Grampians, in the year 84; and this marks the most northerly point which the Romans reached in Scotland, or, as it was then called, **Caledonia**.



Boadicea.

2 Boadicea (59-62).—Queen Boadicea, who ruled over a tribe of Britons in the east of the island, was very cruelly treated after her husband's death. In truth, a Roman officer commanded her to be scourged in presence of his soldiers. She called the Britons together, and spoke to them in fiery and bitter words, so that they rose as one man against the Romans. At first the Britons were successful; but on the return of the chief

Roman general from the west—whither he had gone to attack the Druids—a great battle was fought, in which the British tribes were cut to pieces, and the British power utterly broken. Boadicea, who now saw nothing before her but a choice between slavery and death, took poison, that she might not fall into the hands of the detested Romans.

3. Roman Settlements.—Not merely did the Roman soldiers form camps and found little colonies in different parts of the island, but many Roman merchants came over and settled in Britain for the purpose of trading. Many of the noble and wealthy Romans came here also, during the summer months, to spend their holidays in the cooler and more bracing air of Britain, and to bathe in its cold clear waters. These Romans built beautiful houses, erected temples, and laid the foundations of large towns.

4. Roman Towns.—The two chief Roman towns were London and York; and many remains of Roman buildings are still to be seen in these cities. But all the towns in England the names of which end in **caster**, **cester**, and **chester**, were once the sites of strong Roman camps. And if we look over the map of our country, we shall find that throughout the north the hard form *caster* has been kept, as in **Lancaster**; in the middle, we find the form *cester*, as in **Leicester**; while in the southern and western parts of England the word has been shaped into the still softer form *chester*, as in **Chester** and **Winchester**. . . . The Romans also built fine houses and beautiful baths. Some of the tiles they used in paving these baths are still to be seen. The bricks that were made by the Romans are harder and better to-day than any bricks now made in England; the mortar they used is as strong as ever it was, and is harder than the very stones it binds together.

5. Roman Roads.—Before the Romans came, there were no roads in Great Britain at all. Any one who wanted to travel had to ride on horseback up hill and down dale, and to find his way through the woods and open glades, over swollen rivers and rugged mountains, as best he might. But the Romans, who were the great road-makers of the world, built several strong roads from the south to the north and west of the island. The chief of these was the road known to the English as **Watling Street**, which ran from **Richborough** near Dover on to the great standing-camp on the Dee, which we now call **Chester**. This road ran from the south-east to the north-west. Another ran from the south-west to the north-east—from St David's in Wales to Tynemouth on the east coast; and this road passed through the cities of Derby and York on its way. A third road, called the **Foss Way**, ran from Lincoln into Cornwall. Of all these, the most famous and the most travelled was Watling Street, parts of which still exist, and a very small part of which survives, under its own name of Watling Street,—a short street right under the shadow of the mighty dome of St Paul's, in the city of London.

re-quired', needed.
pitched, set in order.

| scourged, whipped very severely.
| e-rect'-ed, built, or set up.

Grampians, a range of mountains in Scotland north of the river Tay.

Colonies. The Roman colonies were *settlements of soldiers*, who had land given to them. They received this land on condition that they should take up arms and fight whenever their country called on them to do so.

Watling Street. The old English people who lived in the north of Germany believed in a race of giants, whom they called *Wallings*. These giants, they thought, lived in the broad band of stars which stretches across our heavens—the band we now call the Milky Way; and they named the Milky Way *Watling Street*. When these old English came to Britain, and saw the great Roman road which ran from the south-east to the north-west of this island—a road made of large square blocks of stone—they thought it could never have been made by men, but that the giant *Watlings* had built it; and they called it *Watling Street*, a name which it keeps in some parts to this day.



Roman Roads.

7.—THE ROMANS SETTLED IN BRITAIN.—II.

43 to 410.

1. **Roman Walls.**—Agricola, who was appointed to be Governor of Britain in the year 78, was the first Roman general who thought of fortifying the possessions which his army had gained. In the year 82 he built a chain of forts at the narrowest part of the island—that is, between the estuaries of the Forth and the Clyde. He also saw the value of the narrow neck of land between the Solway and the river Tyne; and he erected a chain of forts between these points. About sixty years afterwards a Roman general built a stone wall on the line of Agricola's forts, in the year 139, and called it after the name of the then reigning emperor, Antonine's Wall. Before this, the Emperor Hadrian had raised an unbroken earthen rampart between the Tyne and the Solway in the year 121. Then in the year 207, the Emperor Severus built a strong stone wall, close to and north of the Dyke of Hadrian. Many parts of this wall are still standing: English houses have been built out of its stones; and along its course numbers of Roman altars—some as large as tables, some as small as chimney-piece ornaments—have been found. Many of these can be seen in the Museum at Newcastle at the present day.

2. **Christianity.**—The Britons, as we have seen, were pagans; and so were the Romans. Both worshipped false gods. But Jesus Christ was born about fifty years after Julius Cæsar came to Britain; and the new religion of Christianity spread in the larger cities of the world, and took firm root in Rome. And thus it happened that some

of the Roman soldiers sent into Britain were Christians. Moreover, the Christians in Rome sent teachers into many lands to tell the people about the Gospel; and some of these teachers came to Britain.

3. The First British Martyr.—Some of the Roman generals treated the British Christians with great cruelty. They threw them into prison; they scourged them with rods; they put them to death. One Roman soldier named Albānus felt sorry for these poor men; and one day took into his house and hid in his room a Christian priest whom his fellow-soldiers were hunting down. The Roman governor heard that a Christian was hidden in the house of Albanus, and sent down soldiers to seize him. But Albanus put on the priest's cloak, and came out to meet the soldiers, while his guest escaped by a door at the back of the house. Brought before the governor, who spoke angrily to him, Albanus replied that he had learned from his teacher to know the true God, and to worship him alone. Upon this, the governor ordered him to be scourged with rods and then beheaded. Albanus was the first martyr in Britain. A beautiful cathedral in the town named after him—St Alban's in Hertfordshire—a little to the north of London, still marks the spot where this noble Roman soldier was put to death.

ap-point'-ed, fixed upon.

est'-u-ar-y, the mouth of a river up
which the tide runs.

ram'-part, a mound or wall used as a
defence.

Museum. A museum is really *the abode of the Muses*, who were the goddesses of all art. (They were nine in number.) The word now means any collection of works of art, or of curiosities of any kind.

Martyr originally meant a *witness*.

Cathedral really means a church with a *cathēdra* or seat. It is the principal church in a diocese; and in it stands the *seat* or throne of the bishop.

8.—THE BEST ROMAN GOVERNOR AND
THE DEPARTURE OF THE ROMANS.

78-84, and 410.

1. **Agricola.**—The real conqueror of Britain—the man who subdued it by justice, kindness, and the arts of peace—was Julius Agricola, who was governor of the island from the year 78 to the year 84. He not merely broke the power of the British forces in war; he taught the British to imitate the Roman ways, to wear the Roman dress, to learn the Roman or Latin language, to follow new habits and customs, and to study some of the higher arts. He was a very just man, and exceedingly careful to see that every one obeyed the law in every point. He is said also to have introduced into Britain new flowers and new fruits—the rose and the violet, the cherry and the grape.

2. **His Campaigns.**—He conducted seven difficult campaigns in this island; and all of them to a successful end. In the year 80 he entered Albyn or Caledonia (both of them old names for Scotland), always driving the Britons before him. He is said to have advanced as far as the river Tay—a lovely stream, which flows between the northern counties of Fife and Forfar. It did not seem useful to him to fortify that river; but, as has been already said, he ran a line of forts between the two chief rivers of Scotland—the Forth and the Clyde.

3. **His Last Battle.**—In his last campaign and in his last year of office, he met in battle thirty thousand Caledonians, under a great and able leader called Galgacus. The battle took place in what we now call Perthshire, at the foot of

the mighty range of the Grampians: the Caledonian army was completely defeated; ten thousand men were slain; and the rest of the army broke and took to flight. After this, the Romans had no further trouble from the Caledonians.

4. He sails round Britain.—As soon as this battle was over, Agricola went on board his fleet and sailed to the north. His ships sailed round the coast, discovered the Orkneys, saw through the fog and mist an island which they called Thulé, and for the first time made out the fact that Britain was an island.

5. The Recall of Agricola.—The rule of Agricola in Britain was good for every one—Briton as well as Roman. He made strong and lasting roads; built beautiful towns; gave justice to all, rich and poor; and put an end to the power and greed of the “publicans” or tax gatherers—who were in the habit of forcing the Britons to pay more money for taxes than they were bound to pay. The news of his goodness and justice was of course carried to Rome. The Emperor Domitian was not pleased, for he was jealous of the fame of Agricola, and feared that Agricola’s soldiers would try to make him emperor. He therefore recalled him to Rome in the year 84; and from that time Agricola retired into private life, and lived as a country gentleman.

6. Other Roman Governors.—From the time of Agricola the rule of the Romans was always more mild and just than it had previously been; and most of the governors and generals followed his ways, and carried out his plans. Thus both his lines of forts were strengthened with earthworks, and last of all with strong walls of stone. Only one other governor of Britain is very famous. This was Sev̄rus, who afterwards became Emperor of Rome. It was

he who built a strong stone wall in front of the earthen dyke of Hadrian. After he was made emperor, an insurrection broke out in Britain, and he came back to the island in the year 207. During one of his campaigns, he was suddenly seized with illness, and died at York in the year 211.

7. The Romans leave.—The Romans remained in Britain for about two hundred years after the death of Severus. But in the beginning of the fifth century, the German tribes, who lived in the north and middle of Europe, began to attack the Roman Empire, and even to threaten the great city of Rome itself. The Romans were therefore obliged to call in their forces from other countries, in order to be able to defend their own country and its capital; and not a soldier could be spared. The very heart of the empire was attacked; and no force could be spared to defend the limbs. In the year 410 the Emperor Honorius sent a letter to the governor of Britain, ordering him to bring back all the Roman troops, and to leave the Britons to take care of themselves.

im'-i-tate, to copy : to try to be like.
in-tro-duce', to bring into.

com-plete'-ly, thoroughly ; wholly.

ob-liged', forced ; compelled.

dis-cov'-er, to find out or make known.

fleet, a number of ships in company.

jus'-tice, one's due ; what one is entitled to get.

jeal'-ous, suspicious of or angry at.

pre'-vi-ous-ly, formerly.

in-sur-rec'-tion, a rising against a ruler ; a rebellion.

Campaign was originally a *large open field*, and hence it came to mean the time an army stayed in the field in one year.

Caledonia was the Roman name for that part of Scotland which lies north of the Forth and the Clyde.

Publicans. In the Roman Empire the right to gather the taxes was sold to men who were called *publicāni*. These men were in the habit of trying to force from the people more than they should have paid. The meaning of *inn-keeper* is quite recent.

German Tribes. The German tribes came from the north and middle of Europe. Franks, Swabians, and many others overran and broke up parts of the Roman Empire.

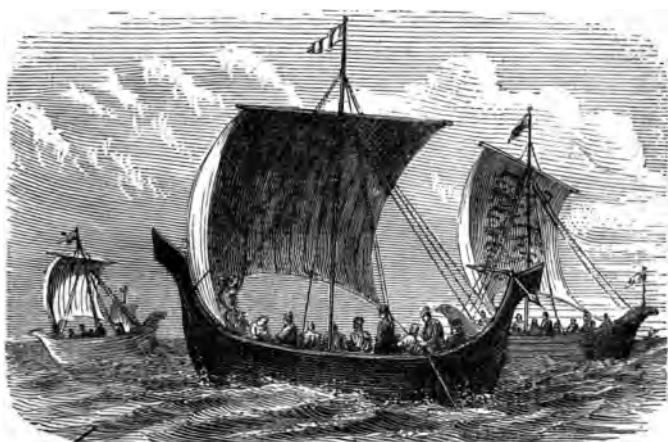
9.—THE COMING OF THE ENGLISH.—I.

400.

1. The Picts and the Scots.—The Romans had taught the Britons many things; but they had not taught them how to fight. Now that they had gone, the Britons were left to defend themselves; and they were easily plundered and easily beaten by their old enemies the Picts and the Scots. The Picts came from Caledonia—the country which lay to the north of the Roman Wall between the rivers Forth and Clyde. The Scots were a fierce and hardy tribe of Irish—who crossed the sea to the wild district now called Argyleshire, the southern point of which is very near the north of Ireland. They afterwards settled in Caledonia, and became so strong and numerous that they gave their name to the country—which is now called *Scotland*; just as the strong German tribe of Franks gave their name to Gaul—which is now called *France*. The poor Britons, feeling themselves quite helpless against the attacks of these fierce warriors, wrote a letter to Rome, which they called *The Groans of the Britons*. In this letter they said: “The barbarians drive us into the sea; and the sea drives us back upon the barbarians.” But the Romans were not able to send them a single soldier; and the Picts and Scots went on coming down from the mountains in the north in larger and larger bands, to attack, to defeat, to kill, to plunder, and to burn.

2. The English at Home.—The enemies of the Britons who came from the south were a very different race of people. They were a seafaring people called Angles and

Saxons. Their home was on the continent of Europe—in the north-west corner, just where the river Elbe enters the German Ocean, and where the peninsula of Jutland begins to run to the north. There is in that corner a district which is called **Angeln** to this day; and the people of the district are called **Angles**. Now *Angle* and *English* (or *Anglish*) are just the same word. The Angles, like



English Ships.

their neighbours the Saxons and Jutes, were a free people, and had never been conquered by the Romans or by any other nation. They were a brave people, fond of fighting, fond of hunting, and fond of sailing upon the sea. They were very good boat-builders; and they could make weapons of bronze and of iron. At home they tilled the ground, grew corn, and looked well after their cattle; while the women were clever at sewing and knitting, and kept their houses clean, tidy, and neat.

3. How the English ruled themselves.—These Angles and Saxons did not live in towns, but in the country—on their farms. Several farms taken together made up a village. They had no kings. The farmers in each village met together to settle the affairs of the village; they tried persons who had committed crimes or offences; and they settled quarrels between their neighbours. Sometimes the chief men of all the villages met together to talk with each other about the business and the welfare of the whole people. This was the origin of the Meeting of the Wise Men, or, as it was called in the oldest English, the Witēna-gemote. The farmers at this kind of meeting decided on peace and war, and chose the bravest, most prudent, and most skilful fighters to lead the others in battle.

4. The Religion of the English.—The Angles and Saxons were pagans. Their chief god was Odin or Woden, the god of war, whose name still survives in *Wednesday* and *Wednesbury*. They also worshipped Thor, the god of the air, who wielded the thunder, and gave his name to *Thursday*. Frija,¹ whose name appears in *Friday*, was the wife of Odin, and the goddess of joy and of spring. Sœtēre, the god of hate, gave his name to *Saturday*; and Tiu, the god of the light, to *Tuesday*. They also worshipped the Sun and the Moon; and hence come our names Sunday and Monday. The heaven of these men was called **Valhalla**; and they believed no one could enter it who had not died fighting on the field of battle. In this heaven, as they believed, their days were spent in hunting and fighting; their nights in feasting and drinking—and the drinking-cups they used were the skulls of their enemies.

¹ Pronounced Friya.

bar-ba'-ri-ana, savages.

pen-in'-su-la, a piece of land almost wholly surrounded by water.

dis'-trict, a piece of country.

bronze, a mixture of copper and tin.

or'-i-gin, the beginning; that from

which anything arises.

de-cid'-ed, settled or fixed on.

pru'-dent, wise and cautious.

sur-vive', to remain alive after others are dead.

wield, to manage, to use.

Jutland is the land of the *Jutes*, not the land which *juts* out.

Valhalla, the *heaven* of the German tribes, to which only those who had fallen in battle were admitted.

10.—THE COMING OF THE ENGLISH—II.

400.

1. The English at Sea.—The Angles and Saxons were, from their earliest boyhood, lovers of the sea, and used to the handling of boats. They were strong in pulling the oar and clever in managing the rudder and the sail. They were fond of the sea, and fond of voyages and adventures. Sometimes they sailed away to the icy seas of the far north to attack the largest whales. Sometimes they set out in their war-boats, rowed by fifty men, and made their way across the German Ocean to attack the coast of Britain and to plunder the people. The Britons called them "sea-whelps," "sea-dogs," and "sea-wolves." A Roman writer calls "the sea their school of war, and the storm their friend." For about two hundred years before the year 450, they had been in the habit of coming over in their war-galleys and making a sudden swoop on the east coast of Britain. From their long knives, which they called *Seaxe*—they were known by the Britons as **Saxons**. The Romans had, as early as the third century, appointed a governor to guard the east coast of Britain; and he was known by the title of "Count of the Saxon Shore." But there was now no Roman governor or

Roman army to protect it; and the Angles and Saxons began to come over by hundreds and even by thousands. Whole villages came, just like swarms of bees, and planted themselves in colonies in different parts of this island. There was also a people called **Goths** or **Jutes**, whose name survives in the word *Jutland*; and these three peoples, we must not forget, were of one blood, one language, and one religion.

2. The Language of the English.—Their language was what is now called *Low German*, which is very like Dutch—the language of the people who live in Holland. The Britons, the Picts, and the Scots, on the other hand, spoke a Celtic language, which was like what we now call Gaelic—the language spoken in the Highlands of Scotland.

3. The First Landing of the English.—In the year 449, a band of Jutes, under two chiefs called Hengest and Horsa,¹ landed on a “little gravel-spit” at the little town of Ebbsfleet, in the Isle of Thanet.² It is said that they were sent for by a British chief. The story goes that Vortigern, a chief of the southern Britons, was hard pressed by the Picts or Britons of Caledonia; and, in his sore need, he sent a message asking help from these Jutish leaders. Hengest and Horsa drove back the invading Picts, and received as their reward the little Isle of Thanet to live in. They sent home word to their friends and relatives how fruitful the land was, how rich the people, and how weak and poor as fighters; and thus began the stream of young English settlers into the island of Britain. But these strong young Angles did not come to bring law and order into the island as the Romans had

¹ Both names mean *horse*.

² It is no longer an island, but a continuous part of the county of Kent.

done; they came to seize the land, to hold it for their own use, and to murder its possessors.

4. More English.—For about one hundred and fifty years after the year 449, more and more English kept on coming; while the Britons were driven farther and farther back from the sea, and had almost every year to give up more and more land. The Britons fought best within their walled towns or cities; and it cost the Angles and Saxons most trouble and most bloodshed to drive the Britons out of these towns. When they had driven them out, the English themselves did not care to live in the towns—they did not love town-life; they liked the open air and the open country; and they either burnt down the towns, or left them to go to ruin.

5. A Ruined Land.—On the coast of Sussex, not far from Hastings, there are still standing the walls of the once flourishing Roman town called Anderida. The walls and the mortar of the walls are as solid and sound as in the year they were built. The English could not tear down the walls, because the mortar that held the stones together was stronger than the stones it bound. But they destroyed the houses inside, and built for themselves small cottages outside the city walls. And now the fair land of Britain—once smiling with crops and gay with plenty—began to look sad, and empty, and dreary. It was covered with the ruins of the beautiful country-houses in which the wealthy Romans and the rich Britons had once lived, and of the churches in which the British Christians had worshipped; for the Angles and Saxons were heathens and not Christians. Of all the fine towns and cities built by the Romans, only those of London and York remained standing; the others were either burnt, or pulled down, or half destroyed.

ad-vent'-ures, risks, dangers.
gal'-ley, a long, low-built ship.
pro-tect', to take care of; to defend.

flour'-ish-ing, thriving.
sol'-id, firm; hard.
drear'-y, gloomy; cheerless.

Low German is the language which is spoken in the Lowlands—i.e., the north of Germany; **High German**, what is spoken in the Highlands, which are in the south of Germany. The dividing line is the river **Main**, which falls into the **Rhine** at **Mainz**.

11.—THE COMING OF THE ENGLISH.—III.

400.

1. The Division of the Land.—(i.) The first kingdom which the English set up (in 449) was the small kingdom of **Kent**—a small district which was settled and inhabited chiefly by Jutes. The Jutes took up their abode also in the lovely and fruitful Isle of Wight. . . . The Saxons pushed inland, and settled in the middle and south of Britain; and several counties are still called after them. The kingdom of the South Saxons, or **Sussex**, was founded in 477, and included the two counties now called Sussex and Surrey. . . . The West Saxons founded the largest Saxon kingdom—the kingdom of **Wessex**,¹ which included all the counties west of Sussex and south of the Thames, with the exception of the counties which we now call Devon, Somerset, and Cornwall. These, being hilly and mountainous, still remained British, and were together called **West Wales**.

2. The Division of the Land.—(ii.) The kingdom of **Wessex** was founded by Cerdic in the year 495; and it is from this old Saxon king that our Queen Victoria is descended.

¹ The name *Wessex* is not now in use. The reason seems to be that Wessex contained about seven shires; while from Essex and Sussex was taken only one shire—Middlesex out of Essex, and Surrey out of Sussex. The remaining part of each county retained its name.

. . . The East Saxons formed the kingdom of **Essex**, which included the present counties of Essex and Middlesex.

3. The East of England.—The Angles settled farther to the north, and founded the kingdom of **East Anglia**, which included Norfolk, Suffolk, and Cambridgeshire. As every one knows, Norfolk means North folk, and Suffolk¹ South folk. . . . The kingdom of the Marchland, called **Mercia**—a word which means *Borderland*—was settled chiefly by Angles. It was founded in the year 582. Later on, it took in the Midland Counties, and was bounded on three of its sides by the three great rivers of England—the Severn, the Thames, and the Humber. . . . The large and strong kingdom of **Northumbria**—a word which means *the land north of the Humber*, stretched between that river and the wide estuary of the Forth, on which the city of Edinburgh stands.

4. King Arthur.—In the long and toilsome struggle which the Britons kept up with the Saxons who were pressing them back, there is no British name that stands out with clearness and certainty. It is said that there was a Welsh prince called King Arthur, who fought against the heathen invaders and sometimes put them to rout. The capital of his kingdom was, according to the story, Camelot, in Somersetshire. He wore a golden dragon on his helmet; and his banner also bore in gold the image of a dragon. He was a Christian, it is said; and he was looked upon as the perfect type of courage, purity, and kindness. He gathered round him a band of very brave knights. Arthur and his knights were so self-denying that no one would take a higher place at table

¹ The word *south* takes the form of *Suf* in *Suffolk*, just as it takes the form of *Sur* in *Surrey*, of *Sus* in *Sussex*, and of *Sud* in *Sudbury*.

than another; and therefore the King had a round table made, all the places at which would be of equal rank. Hence the story of King Arthur and the Round Table. A great modern poet—Mr Tennyson—has written many poems about King Arthur and his knights. In one of them he says :—

“ And Arthur and his knighthood for a space
 Were all one will ; and, through that strength, the king
 Drew in the petty principdoms under him,
 Fought, and in twelve great battles overcame
 The heathen hordes, and made a realm and reigned.”

But the heathen hordes pushed back and defeated the British in the end. King Arthur was at length slain in battle ; but the British, for many, many years, believed that he had not died ; and that he would one day come back to found and to rule a great Christian kingdom.

in-hab'-it, to dwell in.

in-clud'-ed, contained; held within itself.

bound'-ed, bordered; surrounded; hemmed in.

toil'-some, hard; difficult; full of toil or labour.

strug'-gle, continued fight.

cer'-tain-ty, sureness.

in-vad'-er, one who enters a country as an enemy.

mod'-ern, belonging to the present time.

hordes, wandering tribes.

Knight, a soldier who, after serving other knights for some time, and taking an oath to live a noble, pure, and good life, always to defend the weak, and to fight only in a good quarrel, was girt with a sword, and had a pair of gilt spurs put on his feet.

12.—THE ENGLISH BECOME CHRISTIANS.—I.

597-627.

1. Gregory the Great.—About one hundred and fifty years after the English began to come to Britain, there was in Rome a famous Pope called Gregory the Great,

Long before he had been made Pope, and when as yet he was only a simple priest, he was one day walking quietly through the streets of Rome, and in his way had to cross the market-place. At that time the Romans still kept slaves; prisoners and slaves from many of the countries of the world were brought to Rome to be bought and sold; and in one corner of a large open square the slave-market was held. Gregory was passing that corner. Looking up, his eye fell on a number of handsome boys, whose bright rosy complexion, golden hair, and blue eyes, at once caught and fixed his attention. He stopped and asked who they were and where they came from. He was told that they were Angles from Anglaland—an island far away in the west. "No," he replied, "not Angles, but angels: they have the faces of angels." When he was further told that they were heathens, he felt very sad, and made a silent vow that he would do all he could to make the people of Anglaland Christians. He never forgot the vow that he had taken; and when he was made Pope, he at length saw a way to carry out his plan.

2. The First Missionary to England.—Gregory looked round for a man of zeal and courage to help him; and his choice fell upon a monk called Augustine. He told Augustine that he wished him to carry the Gospel of Christ to the English heathens; and Augustine, ready and willing, chose forty able and pious monks to go with him. This band of missionaries set out from Rome, travelled through Gaul, and landed with their message of peace and goodwill in the Isle of Thanet in the year 597—at a spot not far from the place where Hengest and Horsa had landed, about a century and a half before, to kill, to burn, and to ravage.

3. Ethelbert and Augustine.—Now Ethelbert, the king of Kent, though himself a heathen, had married a Christian wife. Her name was Bertha ; and she was a daughter of the king of the Franks. When King Ethelbert heard that Augustine had landed in Thanet, he sent him word to stay where he was. Soon after, Ethelbert travelled down to Thanet along with his queen. The king and queen ordered all to be made ready for the meeting ; and they sat upon thrones in the open air. Ethelbert would not go into a house to listen to Augustine ; he feared lest the Christian priest should be a wizard, and might bind him by some powerful spell.

4. The Conversion of the South (597).—Augustine and his monks marched up before the king,—a silver cross being carried in front of them,—singing hymns as they came. When the king heard all that Augustine had to say, and what he wanted to do, he replied : “Your words sound well and kindly in my ears ; but what you say is new and strange, and I cannot believe it all at once ; nor can I leave all at once what I and my English folk have held to for so long. But let me think over what you say, and in the meantime you may stay in my land ; and if any of my folk will believe as you believe, I will not hinder them.” He invited Augustine to come up to Canterbury, gave him a house there to live in, money for the support of himself and his monks, and a building to preach in. This building was the first Cathedral of Canterbury ; and as Canterbury was the first place where Christianity was preached among the English (though not the first to the Britons), the Archbishop of Canterbury has since that time been the chief Archbishop in all England, and the Archbishop of the whole of the South. Soon after the coming of Augustine, Ethelbert and the men of

Kent were baptised, and tried to follow the faith, and to lead the life, of Christianity.

com-plex'-ion, colour of the skin.
zeal, eagerness.
cour'-age, bravery.

pi'-ous, holy
mis'-sion-ar-y, one sent to preach religion.

Pope is another form of the word *papa*. The Pope or *father* of the Church is the Bishop of Rome, and the head of the Roman Catholic Church.

Wizard, originally a *wise man*; one who knew more than his neighbours, and who was therefore supposed to be in league with some evil spirit, and so able to do evil to others.

Spell, originally *say-over*, or *discourse*; a form of words by which wizards called on their evil spirit to help them.

13.—THE ENGLISH BECOME CHRISTIANS.—II.

1. **The Conversion of the North (627).**—At this time the largest and most powerful kingdom in England was Northumbria; and the ruler of it was a great king called Edwin. He was so great a king that, when he rode through his land and its towns, his men bore before him a royal banner of purple and gold. Wherever there happened to be clear and pure springs of water by the wayside, King Edwin ordered stakes to be put up, and brass cups to be hung upon them, that thirsty travellers might drink; and no man dared to steal those cups "for love or for fear of the great King Edwin." His wife's name was Ethelburg; and she was a daughter of the Ethelbert whom we have read of as the first Christian king of Kent. When she came to the Court of Edwin, she brought with her a Christian priest called Paulinus. Now Paulinus did all he could to make Edwin a Christian. At last King Edwin sent and gathered his chief men—who were called Aldermen, his Thanes or officers,

and the Wise Men of his kingdom ; and they sat down and talked with Paulinus about this new religion.

2. The Life of Man.—Then up rose a white-headed old thane, and spoke in this way : “ O king, the life of man seems to me like the short flight of a sparrow through the hall when thou sittest at supper in the winter-time. Thou and thy aldermen and thy thanes are sitting at table ; the hearth is lighted in the midst ; the torches are blazing ; and the hall is bright and warm. But without the snow is falling, and the winds are howling. Then comes a sparrow and flies into the hall, and passes out by the other door. She comes in at one door and goes out by the other ; and passes from winter to winter. For a moment she has rest ; for a moment she is in the light and warmth, she feels not the storm nor the cheerless winter weather. But the moment is brief. The short time of rest and warmth is soon over, and she is out in the storm again, and has passed from our sight. The fair weather lasts but for a moment. So it is with the life of man ; it, too, is but for a moment ; what has gone before, and what will come after it, we do not know, and no man has yet told us. If, then, these strangers can tell us aught of what is beyond the grave—if they can tell us whence man comes and whither he goes, let us give ear to them and think over what they say.”

3. The Heathen High Priest.—Then Coifi, the chief priest of the heathen gods whom Edwin and his Court worshipped, rose and said : “ O king, there is no man in this hall who has served the gods more faithfully than I ; but they have never done anything for me.” . . . Now, when the aldermen and the wise men had made an end of speaking, the king said, “ Let us worship the God of

Paulinus, and follow his ways." And then he called aloud and said, "Who will be the first to throw down the altar of these false gods and to destroy their temple?" And Coifi, starting up, shouted: "O king, I will be the first! Give me a horse and weapons, and I will overthrow the temple of the false gods. Follow me, O thanes, and let us see if the gods can save their own altars!" And then he girt a sword about him—though it was unlawful for priests to carry weapons—and he mounted upon the war-horse of the king. The men who saw him wearing weapons cried, "Coifi the priest is mad." But Coifi rode up to the temple, and hurled a spear at its wooden walls; and the men who were with him rushed in, pulled down the temple, tore down the hedge that stood round it and girt it in, and burned both hedge and temple in one huge fire. And thus passed away the worship of false gods among the Angles in Northumbria.

des-troy', to pull down, to ruin, or | *hurl*, to throw with great force.
put an end to.

Aldermen means *older men*. The older men in a kingdom were supposed to be the wisest, and were gathered together to consult with and advise the king about the affairs of his kingdom.

Thane, a gentleman who was a servant or officer of the king.

14.—ENGLAND BECOMES ONE KINGDOM.

827.

1. The Numerous English Kings.—During the seventh and eighth centuries England was divided into a number of small kingdoms. Sometimes there were six, sometimes seven, sometimes eight. The kings were almost con-

stantly fighting with one another, just as the petty kings and chiefs of African tribes fight with each other at the present day. The size and boundaries of the kingdoms were always changing; and sometimes it was not exactly known what the true boundary of this or that kingdom was. There were such names of kings as Offa, Penda, Oswald, Ini, and many others. The great desire of every king was to become the Overlord of some other king; and, if he were very bold and very rich, he aimed at rising to be the **Bretwalda** or *Wielder of Britain*. This title would answer very much to the modern title of *Emperor*; and the position would correspond—to compare small things with great—with the present position of the Emperor of the Germans, who is himself King of Prussia, and at the same time Overlord of the King of Bavaria, of several other kings, and many grand-dukes, in the country which is called **Germany**.

2. **The Three Chief Kingdoms.**—In course of time some of the smaller kingdoms were absorbed into the larger, and their kings disappeared. At length the three chief kingdoms in England came to be Northumbria, Mercia, and Wessex. **Northumbria** was the name of the largest kingdom in England; and when it was at its largest, it stretched from the muddy Humber to the wide noble arm of the sea into which the river Forth falls. Northumbria¹ took the leading place in the middle of the seventh century. One of its greatest kings was Edwin, of whom we have read; and he was Overlord of all England, with the exception of Wessex. His rule was so strong, his will so firm, and his judgments so fair and

¹ **Northumbria** included what are now the English counties of York, Durham, and Northumberland, as well as the Border counties, and the three Lothians in Scotland.

right, that people in his day said, "A woman with her babe may walk unhurt from sea to sea"—that is, across the whole island. He it was who built the fort of Edwin's Burg—that is, Edwin's Castle, now called *Edinburgh*—on a high, steep, and rugged rock, which looks across a long slope on to the wide Firth of Forth. The capital of Northumbria was York.

3. Mercia.—During the whole of the eighth century **Mercia** held the highest place. It was called *Mercia* or *Marchland*, because it marched with or bordered on Wales. The Saxons generally called the Britons *Welsh*—a word which means *foreigners*. Offa, one of the kings of Mercia, built a strong earthwork from the mouth of the Wye to the mouth of the Dee, to keep out the Welsh; and it went by the name of Offa's Dyke. Then Offa's Dyke became the boundary of England and Wales; and this boundary has not changed very much from the time of Offa until now.

4. Wessex.—In the beginning of the ninth century, **Wessex** rose to the first place among the kingdoms of England. This was in the reign of **Egbert**, the grandfather of Alfred the Great. He marched into Mercia, and forced it to submit to him. He then became Overlord of Mercia and Northumbria, and also took upon himself the title of **King of the English**. He did not call himself *King of England*; that title was not taken till after the death of Alfred.

5. Egbert.—Egbert, whose name means Eyebright or Bright of eye, had lived for a long time on the continent of Europe, at the Court of Charles the Great, commonly called Charlemagne. There he had learned how to manage the business of kingdoms, how to put down kings, and how to make them obey him. One by one he

overcame the English kings, and made them his under-kings, and forced them to own him as their lord and



Norsemen.

sheep, plundered the churches, set fire to the buildings, and were safe back in their ships and well out at sea before a body of armed men had time to march and put a stop to their ravages. These Northmen had for some time been the terror of the French coasts also; and in some of the French churches a new line was added to the Litany—

“From the fury and the attacks of the Northmen,
Good Lord, deliver us!”

7. The Danes try to settle.—Having come at first only to plunder, many of the Danes wished to stay—to seize and to hold land, and to settle upon it. They, in fact, wished to do to the Christian Angles and Saxons exactly what the heathen Angles and Saxons had three hundred years before done to the Christian Welsh or Britons. It was Heathen against Christian once more. Their inroads began in the time of Egbert, who did his best against these sea-robbers. Egbert’s son had to fight them; and his four grandsons were in their turn hard pressed by them. They came in even larger and larger swarms; and it seemed at one time as if all England would be harried by these pirates, and would fall into the power of the Danes.

cen'-tu-ry, a hundred years.
pet'-ty, small and unimportant.
bound'-ar-ies, limits; borders.
ex-act'-ly, truly; certainly.
po-sit'-ion, place in society.
ab-sorbed' (sucked into), made a part
of.

dis-ap-peared', went out of sight.
for'-eign-er, a person belonging to
another country.
ob'-ject, that which is sought for.
pre-sent'-ed, given.
harr'-ied, plundered; laid waste.

Morasteries were houses where monks lived. These monks were religious men who lived apart from the world, and spent their time in copying books, in teaching the people, in gardening, and in waiting upon the sick.

Parchment book. Paper at this time was unknown, and books were written out on parchment, which was made from the skins of sheep.

15.—ALFRED THE GREAT.—I.

871-901.

1. **Who Alfred was.**—Alfred was the son of Ethelwulf, King of Wessex, and the grandson of the powerful Egbert. Ethelwulf had four sons, all of whom reigned over Wessex, the one after the other; and Alfred was the youngest of the four. His brother, King Ethelred the First, had been wounded to death in a battle with the Danes. The English in Wessex were still in the habit of choosing their king; and they chose Alfred, the youngest son of Ethelwulf, to be king after his three brothers.

2. **The State of the English.**—When Alfred came to the throne, the Danes were at the height of their power, and the English in the depths of helplessness and despair. Into several parts of the island there was “a steady inflow of Danish heathens, who conquered as they marched, and settled where they conquered.” Alfred came to the throne of Wessex in the year 871; but “there was little time for merry-making over his crowning.” Instead of sitting quietly on his throne and making laws for peaceful folk, he had to be in the saddle nearly all that year, making head as best he could against the bravest men and the fiercest fighters in the whole of Europe. And yet, during all his long and busy life, he was the victim of an unknown and terrible disease, the attacks of which were very painful, and which, when they had gone, left him weak, weary, and spent. In spite of all his troubles—in spite of all difficulties both within and without—he made himself one of the greatest soldiers, one of the ablest lawgivers and best scholars that England has ever seen.

3. His Defeat and Wanderings.—When Alfred came to the throne of Wessex, it was the only part of England that the Danish kings had not conquered and settled in. There was a Danish king in East Anglia; there was a Danish king of Northumbria at York; and there was a Danish king—Gorm or Guthrum—in the Midlands, and ruling over a large part of Mercia. The Danes wanted to make themselves masters of the whole of the land; and Guthrum marched against Alfred with a great army. The West Saxons were stricken with fear. Many would not fight; some fled across the sea to France; others went away to different parts of England. Still Alfred kept up the struggle with a small but brave army, until at length he saw that his men were too few to fight the Danes with any chance of success. Then, with his wife and children and a few faithful followers, he fled to a small island in the marshes of the Parret, a little river in Somersetshire. There he built a small fort of trees and turf, and remained in hiding. Sometimes he and his children and his men were in want of food and drink; and when they went out hunting and fishing, they were often attacked by the Danes. One day all his folk had gone out to fish, except only Alfred himself, his wife, and one servant. There came a beggar to the door of the house, and asked for a piece of bread. The king was sorry for the poor man, and said to his servant, “What food is there in the house?” “My lord,” replied the servant, “we have nothing but one loaf and a very little wine.” “Well, then,” answered the king, “give half of the loaf and half of the wine to this poor man.” When the men who had gone to fish came back, their boats were full of fish, and they ran with glee to the house and said, “We have caught more fish to-day than in all the

time we have been living on this island." The Book of Psalms was at this time of hiding, hunger, and hardship, the constant reading of Alfred. He carried it in his bosom, and read in it whenever he could.

4. The Battle of Ethandune.—One morning news was brought him that the men of Devonshire had risen and routed the army of Hubba, one of the Danish kings. Alfred saw from this that his people had taken heart and courage again; and he lost no time in putting himself at their head. Very soon a large and brave army had gathered around his banner; and, at the head of these troops, he marched in all haste against Guthrum and his Danes. He found them near a hill in Wiltshire called Ethandune — now Edington — fell upon them, and defeated them with terrible slaughter.

5. Siege of the Danish Camp.—Those of the Danes who were not slain were driven back into their camp; Alfred pursued them, surrounded the camp with his men, and laid siege to it. For two weeks the Danes held out; but by the end of that time all their food was eaten up, and all their fuel burnt, and Guthrum and his men were compelled by cold and hunger to sue for peace. To keep alive the memory of the battle, the men of Wessex cut the figure of a horse on the side of the hill; and there it is to be seen to this day.

6. The Treaty of Wedmore (879).—Alfred saw that it was quite impossible to drive the Danes out of England altogether. In fact, many thousands of Danes had settled in Northumbria, East Anglia, and the Midlands, and were a steady, hard-working, and decent folk, living in quietness and at peace among the English. So he made a treaty or bargain with Guthrum. Guthrum, they agreed, was to keep East Anglia and the northern half of Mercia

or the Marchland. The famous Roman road called Watling Street was named as the boundary; Alfred was to be ruler of all England to the west of this line; but London also was to belong to him. Guthrum also promised to be "Alfred's man;" that is, he promised to look upon Alfred as his overlord.

vic'-tim, a sufferer of injury.

terr'-i-ble, awful; dreadful.

law'-giv-er, one who gives laws to the people.

re-mained', stayed.

slaugh'-ter, killing.

pur-sued', chased; followed.

sur-round'-ed, went round about; hemmed in.

fu'-el, wood, turf, or coals, for burning.

com-pelled', forced.



Map of the Danelagh.

16.—ALFRED THE GREAT.—II.

871-901.

1. **The Baptism of Guthrum.**—When Alfred had starved out Guthrum, and forced him to beg for peace, one of the conditions he made was that the heathen king should be baptised and become a Christian. So Guthrum cast off his heathen faith, and was baptised by a Christian priest—he and almost all of his men. Alfred stood godfather to him. At his baptism he received the new name of Ethelstan, and was afterwards known to his people and to the English as Gorm-Ethelstan. And so, step by step, and year after year, the Danes became quiet and good, and settled down to till the land, to go to church, and to leave their neighbours unhurt and in peace. As they were clever sailors and bold seamen, many of them took to fishing, and to carrying goods in their ships from place to place along the coasts. Thus the country grew richer, and more especially the towns. **London** was one of the towns that grew larger and richer through this trade; and many Danes settled in that city, worked hard, and came to be among the foremost citizens of that great port.

2. **Alfred's Government.**—Alfred the Great was a just man and a careful ruler. He made good laws; and he took care to see that his people obeyed them. He did a great deal more for England than any king that ruled before him; for he was never idle—no, not for an hour. The churches which the Danes had destroyed were rebuilt. A great part of London had been burnt down, and he built it up again. Forts were raised in all the border towns of his kingdom, so that his people might not be taken unawares by the Danes. He built a fleet—a

fleet of ships much larger and better both for sailing and for fighting than the ships of the Danes; for he knew it was much better to fight the Danes at sea than on land.

3. Alfred's Habits.—Alfred was a hard-working man in every way. He loved learning and books; he turned several Latin books into English; and he wrote others himself. He sent abroad for learned men to come and teach his people; and he set up a school in his own palace for his own children and the sons of his thanes and officers. Clever smiths were hired to make swords and weapons, and jewellers to work in gold and silver according to patterns which he gave them. This great king was very careful of his time. There were no watches or clocks in England then; and people could only tell the time of the day by the sun, and the time of the night by the stars—that is, by the place of certain stars in the heavens. So Alfred had candles made of wax, each twelve inches in length; and these candles were kept burning night and day in his room. Each candle was made large enough to last exactly four hours; thus an inch of each burned away in twenty minutes; and in this way Alfred knew how the time was passing. Alfred divided his army into two parts. One half held the forts and guarded the kingdom; while the other half stayed at home to tend the cattle, to till the ground, and to reap the crops.

4. Alfred's Death.—He died in the year 901, at the age of fifty-two, full of labours, though not of years. He was buried in the Cathedral of Winchester, the capital of his kingdom. He was long spoken of throughout Wessex and in many other parts of England as Alfred the Truth-teller, Alfred the Shepherd of England, Alfred the Dar-

ling of the English ; while to later ages he has always been known as **Alfred the Great**.

con-dit'-ions, terms of the bargain or agreement.

es-pec'-ial-ly, chiefly ; principally.

cit'-i-zen, one who lives in a city.

un-a-ware's, without warning ; unexpectedly.

patt'-ern, something to be copied or imitated.

17.—BOOKS AND LEARNING IN ENGLAND IN THE OLD-ENGLISH TIME.—I.

1. **Caedmon**.—Many monasteries, or houses for monks, were built in the kingdom of Northumbria during the reigns of the English kings. One of these was built by a noble English lady called Hild, or Hilda, on the bold rocky cliffs that rise above the town of Whitby—a well-known town upon the coast of Yorkshire. It was at this abbey that the first great English poem was written. It was written by a cow-herd called Caedmon. There was a custom among the Saxons that, when supper was over, each man should take the harp and play upon it and sing, and then pass it on to his neighbour. But Caedmon was very shy—he could neither sing nor play, and would contrive to slip quietly out of the room when he saw the unwelcome harp coming towards him.

2. **Caedmon's Dream**.—One evening, when this amusement was going on, he left the room and went off to the stable, sad at heart and ashamed, because he could not sing. He lay down upon the straw and fell asleep ; and in his sleep he thought that a stranger came and stood before him and said, "Caedmon, sing a song to me." But Caedmon answered, "I cannot sing ; and it was for that reason that I left the feast." Then said the stranger,

"That may be ; but sing to me thou shalt." Then Caedmon humbly asked, "What shall I sing?" and the stranger replied, "Sing the beginning of created things." Then Caedmon sang some verses that he had never heard before.

3. Caedmon's Poem.—When he awoke he went to the Abbess Hilda, told her of his dream, and repeated the verses he had sung. And Hilda said it was a message from heaven. Then one of the monks read to him a story out of the Bible, and told him to sing about that. And so he put that story into verse. Hilda was pleased, had Caedmon taught to read and write, and made him a monk. Caedmon was our first English poet ; and the fame of his poems went all over England, and increased the glory of the famous convent of Whitby. We do not know when he was born ; but he died in the year 680. His poem sings of the Creation ; of the Fall of Man ; of the story of Israel ; and of most of the events related in the Old and New Testaments.

4. The Venerable Bede.—One of the greatest scholars in these early warlike times was Baeda or Bede, who was born seven years before Caedmon died—in the year 673. He was a Northumbrian monk, and lived in the famous monastery of Jarrow-on-Tyne. His fame so spread all over England, and even on the Continent, that hundreds of monks and many strangers came from great distances to be taught by Bede at Jarrow. He wrote a great many books. These books were written in Latin—which was at that time the language used by all scholars. "But still," it is said, "he loved his own English tongue." He wrote a History of the English Church ; and it is from this book of his that Englishmen have learned to know about Caedmon and many other things.

5. Bede's Last Work.—The last piece of work that he did was to turn the Gospel of St John into our English tongue, so that all men—and not scholars alone—might read it. Before it was finished, he became very ill. "Write quickly," he said to his scholars; for he felt that his end was near—that perhaps he would not live to see the book completed. So the poor old man went on telling his scholars what to write; and from time to time he urged them to write quickly. At last, one day, all his scholars were standing round his bed; and the scholars who were writing had come to the last chapter. "There is yet one sentence to write, dear master," said the scribe. "Write quickly," said the dying man. Presently the writer, looking up with joy, said, "It is finished." "Yes, indeed, it is finished," replied Bede, and sank back wearied upon his pillow. Soon after, with prayer and praise upon his lips, he passed quietly to his rest. He died in the year 735.

harp, a stringed musical instrument
played with the fingers.

con-trive, to hit upon a plan.

cre-at'-ed, made out of nothing.

in-creased', made greater.

e-vent', that which happens.

re-lat'-ed, told.

ven'-er-a-ble, worthy of honour and
respect.

com-plet'-ed, finished.

scribe, a writer or clerk.

18.—BOOKS AND LEARNING IN ENGLAND IN THE OLD-ENGLISH TIME.—II.

1. The Makers of Books.—In those days the monks were the only scholars—and, indeed, almost the only persons who could read and write. When an English alderman (or lord) had to sign a paper, he did not take a pen and write his name at the foot of it, but made a

cross, or impressed his seal on a piece of wax fastened to the paper, or stamped the wax with the end of his sword-hilt. Besides being the only scholars and teachers, the monks were the only makers of books. There was no such thing as printing in those days. The first book printed in England did not appear till more than seven hundred years after the death of Bede—in the reign of Edward the Fourth, in the year 1474. In the times we are reading of, all books were written by hand. Paper was not used to write upon; the substance written on was parchment, made from the skins of goats, sheep, or deer. The books were slowly copied in a neat, square, thick black letter, by the monks whose business it was. These monks sat in the writing-room of the monastery; and there no word was allowed to be spoken.

2. Painting and Binding.—It was the work of some of the monks to draw and paint in a large size the first letters of each chapter. They decked these letters with gold-leaf and bright colours; and between the lines of the larger letters they would draw pretty little pictures of flowers, or birds, or butterflies, or houses, or fish swimming, or boats sailing, or children playing. Then, when the books were all written—and written so neatly and carefully and prettily—other monks would bind them. The boards were of wood, covered with strong leather or with velvet, and mounted with bars of gold or of silver, in which precious stones were sometimes set; and, in front, the volume was held together with neatly carved clasps of silver or of gold.

3. The Price of Books.—Books were in those times sometimes sold for hundreds of pounds; and hence the poor could not buy them. A book would sometimes cost more than a house, and a great deal more than a herd of

oxen. Great care was taken that they should not be stolen. Even in the dwellings of nobles, a book might be seen chained to a table in the hall, for the use of those who could read. They had to come to read it there ; they could not take it away—they could not take it off with them to their rooms.

4. King Alfred as a Scholar.—By the time Alfred came to the throne of Wessex, the Danes had destroyed most of the monasteries of Northumbria ; had slain or driven away the monks ; had stolen the books—not to read them, but for the sake of the gold and jewels fastened into their bindings ; and had thus put an end to learning in what was once its chief home—the north of England. Alfred was very sorry for all this ; and he set to work to do what he could to teach the people he ruled over, in the hope that knowledge would spread over the whole country. In one of his own works he says : “ So clean were the English folk ruined, that very few on this side of the Humber could read a letter or turn a piece of Latin into English ; and not many on the other side either could do it.” Alfred always carried about with him a little hand-book in which the Psalms had been written down—and also the English prayers he was in the habit of saying every day ; and when he read or heard any poem or story that he liked, he wrote it or had it written down in this book. To help his people, he also turned a number of useful Latin books into English ; and one of these was the ‘History of the English Church’ that had been written in Latin by the Venerable Bede. He also translated a History of the World. And in this and many other ways, Alfred began and increased the fame for learning and for love of books, which England has had for many centuries, and which it has still.

5. Dunstan.—This great man and able ruler, of whom we shall soon read more, lived in the tenth century, and, like Alfred, did a great deal for learning and books in England. In the long wars between the Danes and the English, the English had forgotten a great deal, and did not know nearly so much as their forefathers knew. Dunstan set himself to work to cure this. He was himself a great reader. He was also a lover of music—he not only played well on several instruments, he also composed music; he was a clear and beautiful writer; he painted and designed the prettiest pictures for the books that were copied by his monks; and he was also a good blacksmith, and a patient and cunning worker in gold and silver. Like King Alfred, Dunstan sent abroad for good schoolmasters; and he was always very glad when he could find in England a man who could teach well. He praised the monks when they made good, neat, and clear copies of good books, and did all he could to help them.

im-pressed', to mark by pressing.

deck, to ornament; to beautify.

fame, much talking about; great and widespread praise.

trans'-late, to turn what has been written in one language into an-

other.

com-pose', to be the author or writer of.

de-signed', made the plan of.

pa'-tient, persevering; keeping quietly and steadily at a thing.

Gold-leaf is gold beaten very thin, and used for the purpose of ornamenting.
Cunning here means *clever* or *skilful*.

19.—THE ENGLISH AFTER ALFRED.

1. Athelstan (925-940).—Athelstan was the grandson of King Alfred; he was like him in wisdom and goodness; and he was the best king, after Alfred, that

Wessex ever had. He succeeded his father, Edward the Elder, who, like his father and son, was also a great soldier. Edward the Elder was the first king of the West Saxons who was lord of all Britain. The kings of the Danes, the Scots, and the Welsh were under-kings to him—were all his vassals or his *men*. In the reign of Athelstan the Danes joined with the Scots and the Welsh, and raised a great army for the purpose of attacking and of conquering him if they could. But Athelstan met them at **Brunanburgh**, a small town (now washed away by the waves) which stood north of the Humber, and defeated them with great slaughter. "His men," says the old story-teller, "hewed them mightily with swords sharp from the grindstone." Athelstan overcame Northumbria, and brought it back into his kingdom. These three great men—Alfred, Edward the Elder, and Athelstan—were the true founders of the kingdom of England.

2. **Edgar and Dunstan.**—To the powerful and able Athelstan succeeded "six boy-kings," who had very short reigns, and no one of whom did very much good to England. The chief of these young kings was Edgar, who was known by the English as **Edgar the Peace-winner**. He was not crowned till after he had reigned thirteen years; and at his coronation he held a great feast at Chester. The place was fixed on in order that the "Welsh" or "foreign" kings might be able to attend. Many kings, some of them English, some Welsh, and some Scottish, came to Chester, knelt before him, and owned him as their overlord. Eight of these kings rowed him in his boat upon the river Dee, while he himself sat in the stern and held the rudder; and this was thought to be the proudest day that England had ever seen. Edgar is called in the old writings "King of the English and all

the nations round about," "Ruler and lord of the whole isle of Albion," and by other high-sounding titles. His chief adviser was the great monk, **Dunstan**, abbot of Glastonbury in Somersetshire, and afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury. He was the first priest who ruled in England; and he did not rule by the sword, but managed the country by his power of thinking and planning.

3. Who Dunstan was.—This great man was born at Glastonbury in Somersetshire, in the year 925. Ireland was at this time the home of arts, letters, and Christianity; and Dunstan had been taught music and literature by the wandering scholars from that island. He not only worked hard to educate the country, but his chief labour was to purify and reform the Church. Forty new abbeys with good schools in them were founded by Dunstan; and the schools were taught by the best teachers he could anywhere find. One of the greatest benefits he rendered to the kingdom was to increase the king's fleet to 360 sail. This fleet was ordered to sail round the island once a-year; and this strong coast-guard kept off the Norse rovers, and made the English farmers and the English priests feel once more safe upon their homesteads and in their abbeys. Advised by him, the king offered rewards to induce the people to root out wolves and other wild beasts from all parts of the country; and they were paid a certain sum for every wolf's head which they brought in. King Edgar, by his advice also, formed the habit of going round his kingdom once a-year. He visited the towns at the time when courts of justice were being held, to receive complaints of bad government, to see his own people, and to hear what they had to say for the good of the kingdom.

4. Ethelred the Unready (979 - 1016).—Edgar and

Dunstan were dead. The next king after Edgar was his eldest son Edward; but he was murdered before he had sat on the throne for four years. To him succeeded his younger brother Ethelred—a name which means *Noble in counsel*. But the fact is, he had no *rede*, or sense, or counsel in his head at all; and so he got the nickname of Unredé¹—a word which means *Wanting in counsel*. His only idea of how to get rid of the Danes, who came in fresh hordes from Norway and Denmark to plunder England, was to give them large sums of money. He bought them off, and they went away; but of course they soon came back again for more.

5. The Massacre of the Danes.—But Ethelred did a still worse thing than giving the Danes money. A great number of Danes had settled in Wessex; and many of these were quiet, peaceful, and hard-working men and women, who had long been living on lonely farms or in busy villages in different parts of the country. Secret letters were sent from London to all parts of Wessex and Kent—for Ethelred reigned over both kingdoms—that, on St Brice's day, the 13th of November 1002, every Dane living among the English should be put to death. It was one of the most terrible and most treacherous acts ever done by any people. The base Saxons, in obedience to their king, rose and carried out these bloody orders only too well and too thoroughly. No ties of blood or friendship sufficed to spare a life; infancy or old age was no bar to the blood-thirstiness of the English; men killed the husbands of their sisters, or the wives of their brothers. They dashed out the brains of babes; they buried alive English women who had married Danes; they set fire to

¹ The old word *unredé* has been changed in newer English into *unready*. This is an error.

a tower in which many Danes had taken refuge. Gunhilda, the sister of the fierce king of Norway and Denmark, Sweyn of the Forkéd Beard, saw her husband and child butchered before her eyes, ere she herself was led forth to die. Her last words were that she did not fear to die; that her blood would be upon the heads of the English; and that her death would very soon be avenged.

6. Sweyn. — Sweyn of the Forkéd Beard, when he heard the fearful news, swore a terrible oath that he would give himself no repose or peace until he had wrested England from the hands of the base and blood-thirsty Ethelred. He called together his war-ships, embarked, and landed his army on the coast of Wessex. For four years he marched through the length and breadth of the kingdom; and his track was marked by burning homesteads and blazing towns. Let us think of it! Four years of a fierce and cruel army ravaging the country with fire and sword! Ethelred could make no head against Sweyn; and he again tried the offer of a very large sum of money. Sweyn took it and went, but he came back again very soon. At last Ethelred had to flee. He fled to Normandy, and the English people were forced to choose Sweyn for their king. On the death of Sweyn, a few weeks after he came to the throne, Ethelred returned to England, and was again called to be king.

suc-ceed'-ed, followed; came after.
cor-o-na'-tion, the act of crowning.
stern, the hind part of a ship.
rudd'-er, the helm; what is used to
steer a boat.
pur'-i-fy, to make pure.
re-form', to make again; to make bet-
ter.

ben'-e-fit, a good and kind deed.
in-crease', to make larger.
com-plaint', a fault-finding.
treach'-er-ous, faithless.
a-venge'd, punished.
wrest'-ed, twisted from by force.
rav'-ag-ing, laying waste and plun-
dering.



THE DANISH MARAUDER.

1. Count Witikind came of a regal strain,
And roved with his Norsemen the land and the main.
Woe to the realms which he wasted ! for there
Was shedding of blood, and rending of hair,
Ruin of homestead, and slaughter of priest,
Gathering of ravens and wolves to the feast.
When *he* hoisted his standard black,
Before him was ruin, behind him was wrack,
And he burned the churches, that heathen Dane,
To light his band to their barks again.
2. On Erin's shores was his outrage known,
The winds of France had his banners blown ;
Little was there to plunder, yet still
His pirates had foraged on Scottish hill.
But upon merry England's coast
More often he sailed, for he won the most.
So wide and so far his ravage they knew,
If a sail but gleamed white 'gainst the welkin blue,
Trumpet and bugle to arms did call,
Burghers hastened to man the wall ;
Peasants fled inland his fury to 'scape,
Beacons were lighted on headland and cape ;
Bells were tolled out, and aye as they rung,
Fearful and faintly the brothers sung—
" Bless us, St Mary, from flood and from fire,
From famine and pest, and Count Witikind's ire ! "
3. He liked the wealth of fair England so well,
That he sought in her bosom for aye to dwell.

He entered the Humber in fearful hour,
 And disembarked with his Danish power.
 Three earls came against him with all their train,—
 Two hath he taken, and one hath he slain.
 Count Witikind left the Humber's rich strand,
 And he wasted and warred in Northumberland.
 But the Saxon king was a sire in age,
 Weak in battle, in council sage;
 Peace of that heathen leader he sought,
 Gifts he gave, and quiet he bought;
 And the Count took upon him the peaceable style
 Of a vassal and liegeman of Britain's broad isle.

SCOTT.

| | |
|---|--|
| ma-raud'-er , one who wanders about seeking plunder. | wel'-kin , the sky. |
| re'-gal , royal; kingly. | burgh'-er , one who lives in a burgh or town. |
| rove , to wander about like a robber. | pest , disease; plague. |
| realm , kingdom. | ire , anger. |
| hoist'-ed , raised. | dis-em-bark' , to come out of a ship. |
| wrack , ruin. | strand , shore. |
| out'-rage , mischief and cruelty. | sage , wise. |
| rav'-age , plunder; destruction. | style , title. |

Beacon. When danger threatened the country, fires were lighted on capes and hill-tops to warn the people.

Vassal or liegeman, one who held land from a king or noble, on condition of fighting for him when called upon.

20.—THE DANISH KINGS.

1017-1042.

1. **Canúte and Edmund Ironside.**—On the death of Ethelred, his son, Edmund Ironside, was called to the throne; but the great and crafty Canúte, the son of Sweyn, raised an army, and resolved to dispute with him the right to the crown of England. Canute and Edmund

fought five pitched battles against each other in this famous year of 1016 ; and the English Edmund was nearly always the victor. The last battle was at Assandun (that is, the Hill of Asses), now called Assingdon, in Essex ; and here the Danes defeated the English and drove them from the field. At last the two kings, by the advice of the Wise Men of England in their Meeting (the Witenagemote), agreed to divide the kingdom between them. Edmund was to be the head-king, and to have all the east and south — Anglia, Wessex, and Kent. Canute was to have Mercia (or Marchland) and Northumbria (or the land north of the Humber). But Edmund, after reigning for only seven months, died suddenly ; and it was said that he had been secretly murdered by the orders of Canute. The story goes that a great earl, called Eðric, came one day to the house of Canute and said, “Hail ! sole king of all this land !” “How,” replied Canute, “canst thou call me sole king, seeing that Edmund reigns over the land of the West Saxons ?” And Eðric answered, “It is not so now, O king, for Edmund thine enemy is dead ; I have had him slain secretly and by craft.” Then said King Canute, “Well hast thou done ; and for this service I will well repay thee. I will set thy head above the heads of all the men and earls in all England.” Then Canute called for a headsman, and ordered him to cut off the head of Eðric. It was set upon a spear and placed high over the highest gate of the city of London ; and thus his head was set above the heads of all the men and earls in all England. Edmund was a strong, tall, large-chested man ; brave, quick, energetic, and persevering ; and he never felt discouraged whatever odds were against him.

2. Canute the Mighty (1016-1035).—Canute was only

twenty-one years of age when he became king of the English. He was a little man, but very strong of limb; and he was even stronger in mind than he was in body. He was not only king of England, he was king also of Denmark and Norway; but he loved England best of all. He was also the first king of England who thoroughly put down the Scots and made Scotland part of his dominions. He married Ethelred's widow, Emma, the sister of another Northman who had made himself Duke of Normandy. He was more beloved by the English than by his own countrymen the Danes; for he set Englishmen, and not Danes, in places of power as earls and rulers in England. For example, he raised two famous Englishmen, Leofric and Godwin,¹ to be earls over two large kingdoms in England. Leofric he made Earl of Mercia, and Godwin he raised to be Earl of Wessex. Godwin was a very wise man; and in no very long time he rose to be the greatest man in England next to the king, and his advice was asked and taken upon everything of importance. Canute, by the help of Godwin, came at last to see that what his kingdom of England wanted most was peace and the reign of justice—fair-play between the two peoples—justice between Englishman and Dane.

3. Canute goes to Rome.—Rome had for a long time been the chief city in Europe; and the Pope of Rome had by this time risen to be the head of the Church. Canute paid two visits to Rome to beg forgiveness of the Pope for his sins and crimes. One of these visits was made in 1027. From that city he wrote a long letter home to the English people, in which he said: "I

¹ **Leofric** means *Rich-in-love*; and **Godwin** or **Godwin** means *good man*. All proper names were at first names that had a *meaning*.

have vowed to God to rule my subjects fairly and justly. I will not have money heaped up for unjust ends or by unjust demands." He became very good and open-handed to the Church, and kind to the monks. He was fond of music and singing; and he is said to have made verses. One summer eve, just before sunset, he was sailing in



Canute at Ely.

his barge at Ely, in the Fen Country, when the monks of the cathedral were singing at their evening service. The sweet sound of the singing came across the calm water to his listening ear; he bade the rowers draw nearer to the land; and he made this little verse:—

Merrily monks of Ely sing
As by them rows Canúte the king:
“Row, boatmen, to the land more near
That we these good monks’ song may hear.”

4. England at Peace.—There was now throughout the whole of England a settled peace. King Canute would not allow his Danes to spoil England and to plunder Englishmen, as they much desired to do; and he tried to rule as an honest English home-king, and not as a foreign conqueror. One bad thing the English had learned from the Danes—they had learned to be great drunkards; and it took them a long time to get rid of this habit of drinking. Canute died when he was only thirty-nine; and he left his three kingdoms divided among his three sons. He left Norway to his son Sweyn; Denmark to Hardicanute (or Harthacnut); and Harold he made King of England. Harold had the nickname¹ of Harefoot, because of his great swiftness in running.

5. Harold the First (1035-1040).—After the death of Canute, the people of England were divided in their opinions and wishes regarding a king. The men of the south, led by Godwin, were for Hardicanute. But the men of the north, and the sailors of London—most of whom were Danes—wanted to have Harold for their king, as Canute had wished. This opinion was not only right: it had the support of the great Earl Leofric. At last, after much talk and discussion, it was settled by all parties that Harold should rule in the north, and Hardicanute in the south. But Hardicanute did not care to live in England; he stayed in Denmark, and refused to come over; and the southern English, also grown tired of waiting, chose Harold as their king. Harold the First died at Oxford, in the year 1040, and was buried, not at

¹ The word *nickname* is a corrupt form of the term *ekename*, which means a name added to another to *eke* it out. An *ekename* has become a *nickname*; the letter *n* having stuck to the wrong word.

Oxford, but at Westminster. He is the first English king who was buried there.

6. **Hardicanute (1040-1042).**—When Harold the First died, his brother, Hardicanute, came over to England at the earnest desire of the English, and took his seat on the throne as king. He did no great harm, and very little good, while he ruled over this country. His half-brother Edward, the son of Ethelred and Emma, was living at the Court of Normandy; and he was induced to send for him to come and live with him in England. Hardicanute did not live long. He was one day at the wedding-feast of one of his great men, when, as he was standing up to drain a goblet to the health of the bride, he fell to the earth and never spoke again. Neither he nor his brother Harold Harefoot left behind them any children.

en-er-get'-ic, active; forcible.

per-se-ver'-ing, keeping steadily and
patiently at work.

dis-cour'-aged, disheartened.

vowed, solemnly promised.

de-mand', an asking for what is due;

a claim.

set'-tled, fixed.

in-duced', prevailed upon; caused.

gob'-let, a large drinking-cup without
a handle.

drain, to drink to the bottom.

Fen Country. The counties surrounding the Wash are so low that it is difficult to drain them. They are in consequence one large fen, and are called the Fen Country.

THE LORD OF THE SEA.

1. Before sea-washed Southampton,
With sceptre and with crown,
Canúte, in pomp of purple,
Upon his throne sits down.

2. His vassals, mute, around him,
Await his nod, but he
Peers out with frowning eyebrows
Upon the boundless sea.
3. Then with defiant gesture,
The haughty, grey-haired Dane,
Tamer of England's people,
Flings back his lion-mane :
4. "From this gold chair I sit on
To the blue Baltic's brine,
From Thulé to Southampton,
The world," he cried, "is mine !"
5. "Thou, too, despite thy fury,
White-crested, old sea-wave !
Shalt henceforth pay me tribute,
And be my faithful slave !"
6. And while he speaks, a sea-wave
Flung up its sparkling spray,
And spat upon his beard there,
As if in scornful play.
7. But, taking off his crown, then,
And turning, thus spake he,
"See you ! man's might is idle !
To God all glory be !"

BROOKS.

pomp, proud show.
mute, silent.
peer, to look keenly.
de-fi'-ant, proud and haughty.
ges'-ture, movement of the body.

brine, salt water ; the sea.
de-spite', in spite of.
fu'-ry, wild rage.
trib'-ute, money paid by conquered
 people to their conqueror.

Southampton, an important seaport in the south of Hampshire, 78 miles south-west of London.

Purple was the colour of the robes of state of the Emperor of Rome ; and it thus came to be used by the kings throughout Europe.

Baltic, the inland sea which lies to the east of Denmark, and Norway and Sweden.

Thulé was the name given by the ancients to the most northerly part of Europe of which they had heard.

21.—EDWARD THE CONFESSOR.—I.

1042-1066.

1. **Who Edward was.**—Edward the Confessor was the son of Ethelred the Unready and Emma of Normandy. He was half-brother to the two last kings. He was chosen king of England at a meeting of the Wise Men, upon the advice of Earl Godwin ; and thus it happened that England had once more an English king ; and the line of the Danish kings had come to an end. But though Edward was an Englishman, he had had a foreign education ; and he was foreign in his habits and manners, in his feelings and in his language. He had lived in Normandy from the time he was a boy, all through the reigns of Canute and Harold the First. He spoke Norman-French ; he had Normans always about him ; and he favoured the Normans more than he favoured either the English or the Danes. So much did he favour the Normans, that he made two Norman monks Bishops of London and Dorchester. We might, then, very well date the coming of the Norman-French language into this island from the year 1042. In the year 1045 he married Edith, the daughter of Godwin, the Earl of Wessex ; and this made that great and powerful earl more powerful and more great than ever.

2. The Godwins.—Godwin, Earl of Wessex, had himself married a great Danish lady. Her name was Gytha; she was the sister of Ulf, the brother-in-law of Canute; and thus Godwin, though an Englishman, was in some way related to the great Danish king, Canute the Mighty. His two eldest sons—who had received Danish names—Sweyn and Harold, were also made earls. Harold was made earl of the east English; and Sweyn was made earl over the west border, to protect that part of England against the inroads of the Welsh. Thus it was that the Godwins were at this time the most powerful family in the whole of England.

3. Visit of the Duke of Normandy to England.—But Godwin, in spite of his wisdom and great power, in spite of Edward's feebleness of character, contrived to quarrel with his king; and he was, in consequence, banished from the kingdom. While Godwin was away, a strong duke and great soldier—one of those men who have made their mark deep in history, a Northman by blood, called Duke William of Normandy—came over to England on a visit to Edward the Confessor. Edward had this name, we must remember, because he was a man of great piety; in fact he was too weak and gentle to be a ruler of stubborn English and sturdy Danes; he was more fit to be a praying monk than a ruling king. This weak man was easily talked over by the big burly Norman duke, who got him to promise that William should have the kingdom after his death. If Edward really promised this, he promised what he had no right to give; for the king of the English had always been chosen or elected—had always reigned not by right of birth or of rank, but by the choice of the Wise Men. This visit of Duke William's took place in the year 1050—sixteen years

before he appeared on the shores of England to seize the country.

4. Who Duke William was.—About one hundred and fifty years before the famous year of 1066, there lived a fierce Norse pirate called Rolf the Ganger or Walker. He had received this name, because he was so tall that, when he bestrode the small Norwegian ponies, his feet trailed on the ground and he could not ride, but was obliged to walk. This man, in the year 912, had seized a large part of the fertile valley of the river Seine. The king who ruled over that part of France, Charles the Simple, made a treaty with the Northmen of much the same kind as Alfred made with Guthrum. Like Guthrum, Rolf, too, was baptised into the Christian faith, and had the boundaries of his land clearly marked out for him. The Norsemen whom he brought with him married French wives, learned to speak French, and gave the name of the *Land of the Northmen* or **Normandy** to the country in which they had settled. From this tall pirate Rolf, William, Duke of Normandy, was descended. William's father was called Duke Robert; and his mother was the daughter of a tanner. This fact was often thrown at him as a reproach by the great nobles who did not like him, or thought they had good reason to hate him.

fa'-vour, to treat kindly; to regard with goodwill.

con-trive', to hit upon a way; to manage to bring about.

ban'-ished, driven out of the country.

stubb'-orn, immovable; obstinate.

bur'-ly, tall, stout, and strong.

pi'-rate, a sea-robber.

re-ceived', got.

o-blighed', forced.

fer'-tile, fruitful.

re-proach', disgrace.

22.—EDWARD THE CONFESSOR.—II.

1042-1066.

1. **Visit of Harold to Normandy (1064).**—On the other hand, Harold the son of Godwin also paid a visit. He paid a visit to Normandy; but his visit was an unwilling and a most unlucky one, and no good came of it either to himself or to his friends. He was one day sailing in the Channel with his brother, when a storm arose, drove his ship eastward, and wrecked it on a reef on the coast of France. His father had died in the year 1052; and Harold was himself at this moment Earl of Wessex and really ruler of England. The Count of the part of France on which Harold was wrecked seized him and threw him into prison; not with any cruel purpose, but in the hope that King Edward would pay a very large ransom for him. But Duke William, on hearing the news, immediately sent a messenger to the earl, and threatened him with war and severe punishment unless he let the English noble go. So Harold was set free, and he made his way to the palace of Duke William of Normandy. The duke was very glad to see him, welcomed him with open arms, made feasts in his honour, took him out hunting with him, and filled every hour of his stay in Normandy with pleasure, pastime, and entertainment. He also loaded him with presents—such as beautiful horses and highly decorated arms; and at length offered him one of his own daughters to wife. The Norman duke had the greatest respect for the wisdom, courage, and strength of the great English earl. He was right. For one day, when the two nobles were out together on the sea-shore, the Englishman gave proof of his amazing strength by

pulling on to firm ground by his own unaided arms several Norman knights, who had wandered into a quicksand and were fast sinking in it.

2. The Unfair Oath.—Before Harold returned to his home in England, the duke one day asked the earl to swear that he would be faithful to him, that he would help him to the English crown, and that he would marry the duke's daughter. Here was a pretty difficulty. What was Harold to do? He was completely in the duke's power; and if he had refused to take the oath, William would have thrown him into a dungeon in his palace, and kept him there just as long as he himself should please. So Harold laid his hand on a casket which stood on a chest covered with a cloth; and with downcast eyes he spoke after Duke William the words of the oath that had been forced upon him. As soon as he had sworn, William removed the casket, drew off the cloth, lifted the lid of the chest, and showed him that it was full of the bones of the Norman saints. Harold started back with horror; for he felt now that he had been doubly deceived, and that he had taken the most sacred and binding oath that could be laid upon any man. But there was no help for it.

3. Earl Harold as Prime Minister.—We have seen that Harold was made Earl of Wessex after his father died, and that he became the chief adviser of the king. He was indeed the greatest man in the whole country; and for nearly thirteen years he was the real ruler of the whole kingdom. There were often quarrels arising between the different parts of the kingdom of England; but the only persons in the country who gave any great trouble were the Welsh; and he very soon put them and kept them down.

4 The Death of Edward.—Edward the Confessor had long been ill; and at length he died on the 5th of January 1066. He had just finished a cathedral called The West Minster—which we now call Westminster Abbey. His body was buried in that church; and the old part of the abbey which he built is still to be seen. Edward was a very pious man; and that, as we have seen, is the reason why he was called Edward the Confessor. He was a handsome man, with a sweet expression of face; and in his later years his hair and beard grew to be as white as snow. When he was dying he was not easy in his mind; he was heard to mutter, over and over again, sad things about war and trouble that he foresaw coming on his beloved country of England.

im-med'-iate-ly, at once.

se-vere', serious; harsh.

pal'-ace, a royal house.

pas'-time, that which helps to pass the time; amusement.

dec'-or-at-ed, ornamented, beautified.

a-maz'-ing, wonderful; very great.

un-aid'-ed, without help.

reef, a chain of rocks rising above the

water.

mo'-tives, reasons.

ran'-som, the price paid to free one from imprisonment.

dun'-geon, a close, dark prison.

cas'-et, a small case.

de-ceived', cheated.

hand'-some, good-looking.

ex-press'-ion, look.

Quicksand really means *living sand*, that is, sand moving about, and into which any one sinks very readily.

23.—THE LAST OLD-ENGLISH KING.

1066.

1. Harold's Short Reign (January 5 to October 14, 1066).—This year of 1066 is one of the most memorable years in the history of our country, and it saw the greatest change that had ever taken place in England. In the course of this year England had three kings; and

before it had gone out, the line of old-English kings had come to an end, and a line of foreign kings had begun. Since Britain had become England, no year was so full of great and important events as this. **Harold Godwinson, Harold the Second** (for Harold Harefoot, the son of Canute, was Harold the First) was elected king by the Wise Men the very day that the Confessor died. The morning after, on the 6th of January, the dead king was buried and the new king crowned in a chapel of the new West Minster.

2. Duke William hears the News.—A private messenger had hurried off from London to France, and Duke William heard the double news of the death and coronation within a few days of both events—and both at the same time. He was just leaving his castle to hunt, when he met the messenger with the weighty news. He turned back into his room. He spoke to no man; and no man durst speak to him. He sat alone throughout the live-long day—solitary, silent, and thoughtful—with his face covered with his cloak. At last he rose, with a resolution made and firmly fixed in his mind. He had come to see that, if he wished the crown of England, he must win it by the sword, and by the sword alone.

3. Duke William's Character.—William was one of the greatest men and also one of the most terrible warriors that ever lived. He dreaded no enemy; he feared no difficulty; he lost his patience in front of no obstacle; his courage rose with rising danger; he was never wearied in waiting or in using craft and cunning. He was almost a giant in height; and his strength was so great that he could with ease bend a bow on horseback which no other man could bend on foot. The spirit of the Norse sea-wolves lived in him again—in his fiery eyes, in his savage

countenance, in the fury of his anger, in his pitiless revenge. When a battle was going against him, his spirits rose highest, and his eyes shone like balls of fire. His voice was piercing as the note of a clarion, and rang out like a trumpet above the din and confusion of battle.

4. The Duke prepares to invade England.—Duke William had made up his mind to invade England; and no man, or thing, or power in the world could stop him or bar his way. The dangers were terrible; the difficulties immense. No man but himself—no man less brave or less strong—would have faced the countless dangers and difficulties that stood in front of him. No one in England was looking for him; no one was willing to join him; no one wanted him to be king; he had no party there. His barons in Normandy did not care to go and fight in England, and he was obliged to coax, or to threaten, or to bribe them to come along with him. But he needed more than an army of Normans; and he sent into all parts of France for soldiers. The army he brought together was a various horde—a mixed army gathered together from every quarter. For six months there was hard work going on, day and night, everywhere all over Normandy. William had, in fact, to make a fleet; he had to make it from the very cutting down of the trees and the shaping of the wood. Shipwrights were hewing, carpenters were hammering, engineers were planning at every port—large and small—in the duke's dominions. The sweating sword-smiths were ceaselessly at work forging sword-blades and spear-heads; the armourers were day and night shaping the iron or riveting the joints of the breast-plates and the hauberks; the carters with their waggons and pack-horses, bearing corn and wine and all kinds of stores, blocked the roads of Normandy on their

way to the duke's camp at the mouth of the river Dive.¹ The Pope sent his blessing and a holy banner.

5. The Duke lands.—At last—at last all was ready; and the duke and his followers went on board, and set sail on the 29th of September, in the fateful year of 1066. He had with him a fleet of 696 ships; and these ships carried an army of 60,000 men. The fleet arrived on the coast of Sussex, near **Pevensey**, late in the afternoon. William was the first to spring ashore. As he leaped, his foot slipped, and he fell upon the sand. His men raised a cry of horror. But William sprang joyfully up with both hands full of sand, and shouted in his strong clear voice: "What! men, you see that I have taken *seisin* of this English land with both my hands, and I will hold it with these hands against all foes that come!" For, when a lord gave lands to one of his vassals, he handed him a piece of turf or a clod of earth, as a sign that he gave him possession or *seisin* of the lands. When all the men, horses, arms, and provisions were landed, the carpenters put up two wooden castles which they had brought over from France in pieces, all jointed and ready. Where was the king of the English all this time? Where was the English army? Was there no force that could hinder—were it but for a day—the landing of these terrible Normans? Why was this army of Frenchmen and Normans allowed to land, without a hand or a sword being lifted against their coming? The answer to these questions we must look for in the next chapter.

e-lect'-ed, chosen.

sol'-i-tar-y, alone; without company.

coun'-ten-ance, face; appearance.

pit'-i-less, without pity.

con-fu'-sion, disorder; want of order.

im-mense', very great.

do-min'-ion, country ruled over.

cease'-less-ly, without stopping.

¹ Pronounced Deev.

24.—THE BATTLE OF STAMFORD BRIDGE.

1066.

1. **Harold's Brother Tostig.**—Harold was nearly three hundred miles away. His brother Tostig, Earl of Northumberland, had been thrust out of the land by the people of his earldom, because of his cruelty and injustice towards all his subjects; and when he sent word to Harold, Harold would neither aid him nor permit him to come back. He fled to the Continent, and went to king after king to ask for help; but no one cared to run the risk of helping him. At last Harold Hardrāda, the King of Norway, said that he would go with him.

2. **Harold Hardrada of Norway.**—This Harold Hardrada was a big strong man, an able king, and a great warrior; and he was wise as well as brave. He had fought in many parts of the world; and the fearful story ran that at one time, when in Egypt, he had met in single combat and slain with his own unaided hand a strange and fierce animal, sheathed in armour, called a crocodile. Tostig and Harold Hardrada joined their fleets and armies, and landed their troops at the town of Tynemouth, on the coast of the old province of the English earl.

3. **The March to Stamford Bridge.**—But when Harold the Second of England heard this, he called together an army, collected provisions, and marched north with all speed, up the strong Roman road which was called by the Saxons Watling Street. After a long and difficult march from London to Northumbria, the two armies at last stood face to face at **Stamford Bridge**. Then Harold of England rode out from the ranks of his men with a few of his nobles, till he came half-way

between the two lines of battle, and shouted, "Is Tostig the son of Godwin here?" Then Tostig rode out from the ranks of his army, and said, "Behold, Tostig is here!" Then Harold cried, "Harold of England offers Tostig peace and one-third of the kingdom of England that he may rule over it; for he would not that brother should fight against brother." Then answered Earl Tostig, "Last winter my brother had nought for me but words of scorn and high disdain; but now am I glad that he speaks both kindly and fairly. But what will my brother King Harold of England give to King Harold of Norway for his trouble in coming here?" And Harold said, "Seven feet of English ground, or perhaps a foot over, seeing he is taller than most other men." Then answered Earl Tostig, "Go thy way! Tostig will not desert his friends and go over to his foes. He and his friends will die on this spot like men, or will win England with their arms." Then Harold Hardrada, riding up, asked Tostig, "Who is that man who spake with thee?" And Tostig replied, "That is my brother Harold, the son of Godwin, and king of the English." And Hardrada answered, "He is but a little man; but he sits well in his stirrups."

4. The Battle.—Then went Hardrada and put on his coat of mail, took his two-handed sword in his hand, and stood in his post in front of his royal banner, which was called in the Norwegian army **The Land-waster**. And the battle began. The English pressed the Northmen hard, and drove them ever back—until they came to the river Derwent. Then they pressed still harder upon them, to drive them into the water. But one Northman stood still, and with uplifted sword kept the bridge till his fellow-soldiers could pass over. Many an English

knight and soldier came up against him, but all fell before him. At last one man got under the bridge, which was of open planks, and he thrust his spear up through the bridge and wounded the brave Northman in the thigh, so that he died.



Battle of Stamford Bridge.

5. The Defeat of the Danes.—At last Hadrada and Tostig were slain ; and from this moment the Northmen grew weaker and weaker, and the English stronger and stronger, and fiercer and fiercer. When at length the shades of evening fell, Harold of England remained master of the field ; and those of the Northmen who were not slain had fled in panic to their ships. Then they put to sea and went home again ; while Harold marched to York and asked his friends and fellow-leaders to a great

and splendid feast there. But the gain of the battle of Stamford Bridge proved to be the loss of the battle of Hastings; and the loss of the battle of Hastings was the loss of the realm of England to the English people.

6. Harold marches back.—The battle of Stamford Bridge was fought on the 25th of September; and four days after, Duke William had landed his army on the coast of Sussex. King Harold was sitting at the long board, feasting among his warriors and nobles, and drinking healths and toasts in honour of the great victory they had won; but in the middle of the feast there appeared a thane of Sussex with terrible news. There were no railways, or telegraphs, or posts in the eleventh century, and the swiftest way of carrying news was on horseback. This man had galloped all the way, by relays of horses, from Hastings to York; and had brought the news that sixty thousand Normans and Frenchmen had landed at Pevensey, and were laying waste the country round about. So Harold could brook no delay—could take no further rest, but was obliged to march back with all speed to the other end of his kingdom—to the far-off coast of Sussex. He commanded Edwin and Morcar, the Earls of Mercia and Northumberland, to gather together their men and follow him; but they would not. For they said to themselves, “If Harold falls, we shall divide England with Duke William, and be kings of our own share of England instead of earls.”

pan'-ic, great and sudden fear.
re-lay', a supply of fresh horses to relieve others.
col-lect'-ed, gathered together.

pro-vis'-ions, food.
dis-dain', contempt; looking down upon.
de-sert', to forsake; to leave.

Stamford Bridge, on the Derwent, about seven or eight miles north-east of York.

25.—THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS.—I.

October 14, 1066.

1. **Harold's Army.**—Harold marched south with his wearied army to a place called **Senlac**, near the town of Hastings in Sussex; and they encamped upon a hill there not far from an old and hoar apple-tree. This hill was the last spur of the table-land in that part of Sussex; it ran out into the plain like a kind of peninsula; and it was thus a very strong position. Duke William and his men lay in the open country below. The autumn night was cold, sharp, and clear. The English spent it beside their watch-fires, eating and drinking—passing around strong ale and wine in cups of horn—and singing glees and songs. The Normans passed the night in prayer and serious thought; thousands took the Sacrament; and they rose in the morning with clear heads, fresh feelings, and strong limbs.

2. **Harold's Position.**—Harold had made a trench and a stout paling or stockade of wooden stakes along the hill and in front of his line; and behind this stockade stood the English line, shield touching shield. An army so posted can resist as long as it stands, a firm and solid band, in its place; but it cannot move without danger from the spot where it is posted. In the centre Harold planted his standards, the Golden Dragon of Wessex and the "Flag of the Fighting Man;" and round these were placed his house-carls or body-guard, and close to them the men of London, whose right it was to fight beside the king. These men were all armed in coats of mail, and they carried great two-handed battle-axes and broadswords, and javelins for throwing. On the sides of the hill the

inferior soldiers and the country folk were posted: they had been very hastily brought together, and many of them were armed only with darts, slings, pitchforks, clubs, bills, or long poles with sharpened points. The English all fought on foot. Harold with his two brothers rode through his army and spoke to the soldiers: "Keep your ranks, men; stand shoulder to shoulder; and we shall win the day. But if you leave your line, or allow the Normans to break it, we must lose. Stand firm!" Then he rode back to his standard and dismounted; for he also was to fight on foot, and was ready to take what should come to him along with his men.

3. William's Army.—Duke William set his men in order on the plain below. In the centre, right in front of the splendid English body-guard and the brave men of London, he posted his Norman knights, who were led by himself and his two brothers. On the left were the Bretons, or men of Brittany; and on the right were posted the hired soldiers. In front of these three divisions he had drawn up a long line of archers. William's army being mostly on horseback, could move with the greatest ease—forwards, sideways, backwards—as the fortunes of the day should turn. The position of the Normans was near a place called Telham. But, while the English had by far the strongest position, they were greatly outnumbered: there were only 20,000 English to 60,000 Normans.

4. William's Plan of Attack.—What Duke William had to do was to take the hill of Senlac; and his plan of attack was this. The archers were to let fly a shower of arrows upon the English. Then the heavy-armed foot were to march up the slope and do what they could to batter down the paling; and, last of all, the Norman

knights were to be ready to pour in through any gap that might be made. The man to begin the battle was a Norman minstrel-knight called Taillefer,¹ or Cut-iron, who had asked and obtained leave from the duke to strike the first blow. He rode out against the English, singing an old battle-song, whirling his sword high up into the air and catching it by the heavy hilt as it fell. He ran one Englishman through and felled another to the ground. At length he fell himself, wounded to the death: he was the first man to strike a blow, and he was the first to fall. Then the battle began.

hoar, white with age.
 en-camp', to pitch tents; to halt on a
 march.
 glee, a song in parts.
 jave'-lin, a short spear

bill, a hatchet with a hooked point.
 pitch'-fork, a two-pronged fork for
 pitching hay.
 cen'-tre, middle.
 hired, paid.

26.—THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS.—II.

October 14, 1066.

1. **The Attack.**—The archers sent a shower of arrows upon the English host; and then the heavy-armed foot charged up to the barricade, with the old French shouts of "Dex aie!"² while the English received them with flights of javelins and shouts of "Holy Cross!" or drove them back with cries of "Out! Out!" Three times the Norman knights attacked the English line; three times was the Norman horse driven back, with thrusts from spears and heavy blows from the mighty

¹ Afterwards in English, *Telfer*. It was the name for a sword-smith.

² God aid us!

two-handed battle-axes. A single blow from the arm of Harold would cut down horse and rider together. Firm as a rock stood the English, swinging their great battle-axes and cleaving their way through iron coats and shirts of mail. The battle raged from nine in the morning till three in the afternoon. The Normans might as well have charged a stone wall. There was no grinding roar of cannon-shot tearing through the air—no perpetual crack of rifles; but the unceasing whizz of arrows, the clash of lances, the dreadful clang of battle-axes upon steel armour, the clattering ring of sword crossing sword, the hoarse shout and the loud and clear command, the war-cries of the soldiers, the shrieks of men struck to death, and the piercing blasts of the war-horns,—made a din such as the shores of England had never heard before.

2. Duke William in Battle.—Above all this ringing and deafening clamour, the trumpet-voice of the mighty duke might ever and anon be heard, as with clarion-sound it urged on the Normans to advance to the fight. William had two horses killed under him. The second was killed by the thrust of a spear, and Duke William fell stunned to the earth. A cry arose that he was slain. Mounting another horse, he tore off his helmet, that all might see him, and shouted above the din of battle, "Here am I! I am not slain! I am safe and sound, and by God's help will yet win the day!" Mad with rage, he spurred straight at the royal standard, broke his way right through to Harold, and, though again unhorsed, with one blow of his heavy mace killed a brother of the king.

3. The Feint.—The duke, in spite of his war-fury, still kept his coolness of head, his dogged perseverance, and his ready invention. Finding that with all his efforts he could

not break the strong line and the barricade of the English, he ordered a party of his knights to turn and flee. The Kentish men thought that this was the end, and that the day was theirs. They forgot the orders of their king, left their line, rushed after the Normans who were flying before them, and thus the left of the barricade was deserted and unmanned. It was only a trick. In a moment the Normans had turned, cut down their pursuers in the open field, and dashed past them on to the hill. There they made a wide gap in the English line; and through this gap the Norman horsemen poured in hundreds.

4. The Death of Harold.—The English had now to face about and to fight without the help of their strong barricade. It was six in the evening; but the brave ring round the standards was still unbroken. Harold with his body-guard and the London men held their ground, and did not yield one single inch. "Slowly and surely," says a historian, "the Norman horse pressed along the crest of the hill, strewing the height with corpses as the hay is strewn in swaths before the mower." William now ordered up his archers to the front, and commanded them to shoot upwards into the air, "that the arrows might fall like bolts from heaven." The English were unable to use their shields, as both hands were needed to swing their great axes; and the showers of arrows falling thick as hail on heads and faces, killed or wounded many a brave fighting man. One arrow struck Harold in the right eye; he dropped his axe with a short sharp cry of pain. The Normans made a last rush, and four knights fell upon Harold and slew him at the foot of his standard.

5. The Battle is lost.—His two brothers had been

already slain ; and now the English, being left without a leader, saw they must retreat ; yet they drew off fighting



Finding of the body of Harold.

to the last. There was a marshy plain behind the hill where the English army had been posted ; and into this

the Norman knights pursued them. Many of the Norman horses stuck fast in the swamp; and the English foot-soldiers wheeled, turned, and killed them all to a man. The place was long after known by the Normans as Malfosse, or the Evil Ditch. It was now too late, however, to win back the day: nothing could by any chance turn the tide of fortune; the duke held the hill, and the victory was with the Normans. So fell the last Old-English king of the English; thus did Duke William win the battle of Hastings; and thus ended the most famous battle that was ever fought on English ground.

6. After the Battle.—Around the two English standards lay the dead—here and there piled up in ghastly, bloody heaps. In the gathering darkness of the October evening the ground was hastily cleared; the duke ordered the sacred banner that had been sent from Rome to be raised; and having pitched his tent upon the height where Harold and his brothers had stood, “sat down to eat and drink among the dead,” and slept there all that night. Next day—it was a Sunday morning—came many English women, with pale faces and eyes red with weeping, to beg from the conqueror leave to bury their dead. Among them was the mother of Harold. She offered its weight in gold for the body of her son. But, though William had given leave to the other women to carry off the bodies of their dead, he would not grant the like boon to the mother of his enemy. Edith of the Swan Neck—a lady whom Harold dearly loved—sought long for his mangled corpse. At length she found it under a heap of dead, but so cut and bruised, so clotted with blood and defiled with dust, that no one but herself would have known him. The duke bade his men bury the body of the last of the English kings of England under a heap of

stones on the cliffs. "Let him lie there!" he said: "he kept the shore manfully while he lived; let him stay and guard it ever, now that he is dead." It was, however, afterwards carried to Waltham Abbey, a beautiful church in Essex, which Harold had himself built.

thrust, a stab.

cleav'-ing, splitting with great force.

clam'-our, an uproar.

mace, a club of metal.

feint, a pretence.

dog'-ged, stubborn and stern, like an angry dog.

de-sert'-ed, left; forsaken.

strew, to spread; to scatter.

crest, the topmost ridge.

swamp, low ground covered with standing water.

sa'-cred, holy.

man'-gled, cut and bruised.

LINES ON THE CAMP HILL, NEAR HASTINGS.

1. In the deep blue of eve,
Ere the twinkling of stars had begun,
Or the lark took his leave
Of the skies and the sweet setting sun,
2. I climbed to yon heights,
Where the Norman encamped him of old,
With his bowmen and knights,
And his banner all burnished with gold.
3. At the Conqueror's side
There his minstrelsy sat harp in hand,
In pavilion wide;
And they chanted the deeds of Rol  nd.
4. Still the ramparted ground
With a vision my fancy inspires,
And I hear the trump sound,
As it marshalled our chivalry's sires.

5. Over hauberk and helm
 As the sun's setting splendour was thrown,
 Thence they looked o'er a realm,—
 And to-morrow beheld it their own.

THOMAS CAMPBELL.

| | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| bur'-nished, polished; bright and shining. | trump, trumpet. |
| pa-vil'-ion, a large tent. | mar'-shalled, arranged in order. |
| chant, to sing. | chiv'-al-ry, knighthood. |
| ram'-part-ed, defended with earth-works. | sires, forefathers. |
| | helm, helmet. |

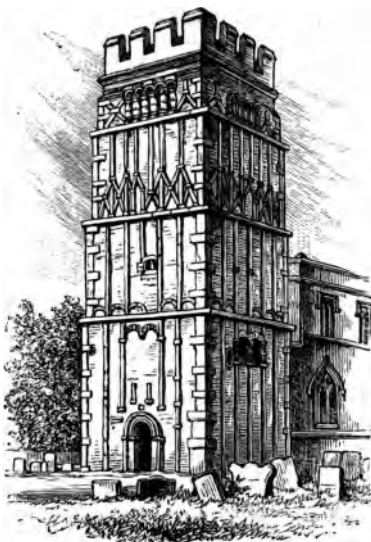
Minstrelsy, a class of men who sang to the harp verses composed by themselves or others.

Roland, a famous French hero and warrior who lived in the eighth century.

27.—OLD-ENGLISH OR SAXON MANNERS AND CUSTOMS.—I.

1. The Saxon House.—In the sixth century, the houses of the English settlers were merely thatched huts, with holes in them to let in light and let out smoke. The churches and even the palaces of kings were built of wood, badly jointed; and the rooms were always full of draughts. When Alfred made use of candles to mark for himself the passing of time, he was also obliged to contrive lanterns to keep off the draughts, and to prevent his candles from burning away too quickly. About the end of the seventh century stone began to be used for the lower parts of the best kind of buildings, so as to raise the house above the damp ground and to keep the floors dry. Thus the hall of a nobleman might be built of logs on a low wall of stone. The sides of such a hall would be hung round with shields and spears, with swords and

bows. The usual light in the evening was given by torches. There was no chimney; the smoke had to escape by the windows, which were not filled with glass, and by a hole in the roof. As the Saxons grew more industrious and more civilised, and society became



Anglo-Saxon Tower.

more peaceful, the women had time to weave and embroider beautiful hangings of cloth, which were hung upon the bare walls. The chief room in a house was called the hall. It had a long table, generally mounted on tressels, running down the middle. At the upper end of the room was a low platform or dais, on which stood the table at which

the nobleman and his wife and children sat. It had a canopy above it, to keep out draughts and to keep off the rain, which often leaked through the roof.

2. At Meat.—The members of the household took their seats in the order of their rank. The slaves generally sat on the floor; and they could not sit down at all until the dinner was over, and the family had risen from table. The joints were handed round on wooden spits by slaves,

who knelt as they offered them; and each person cut off with his belt-knife or dagger the piece that he wanted. Belt-knives such as the Saxons or Old-English wore are still carried in the present day by the men of Norway. The bones and fragments that were left were tossed into a corner, to be picked by the hawks and munched by the dogs. The chief article of food was pork—sometimes fresh, sometimes salted and dried. Then there was game, and there were fish—especially eels, of which the English have always been very fond. Coarse cakes of barley or of oatmeal were eaten with the meat. The drinks were ale, and mead—a drink which was made with fermented honey: indeed, our countrymen have for centuries been much given to strong drinks. While the dinner went on, the harper sat by the fire and played. If he played and sang very well, the nobleman sent him a cup of wine, and perhaps a gold ring or a bracelet.

3. Dress.—The ordinary dress of a Saxon farmer was a “tunic” or smock-frock, which reached to the knees, and was kept in at the waist by a leathern belt. Over that some persons wore a short cloak or cape. Shoes were worn, but not stockings. The women wore a loose gown and a kind of wide mantle. The most usual stuff for making dresses was woollen cloth; but the richer classes had also dresses of silk. Showy colours were admired—especially red, blue, and green. Both men and women wore necklaces, bracelets of gold and silver, and rings. The throats and arms of the men were often tattooed. The women were very clever at weaving, needlework, and spinning. King Alfred, in writing about the men and the women of his own family, speaks of them as “the spear-side and the spindle-side.” The men wore their hair and beards long. Hence arose the mistake of the

spies before Hastings, who were sent out by Harold to spy the camp of the Duke of Normandy. They thought that William's men, because their hair was short and their faces were clean-shaven, must be priests, and not soldiers. They brought back the news: "Most of the men with the duke are priests." "Priests are they?" replied Harold, who had been in Normandy and knew better; "you will find to-morrow that these priests will fight very well."

4. Sports.—The sports best liked and most followed were hunting and hawking; and even to this day the English are the best and boldest hunters in the world. The lower classes in towns were fond of bear-baiting. The most usual indoor amusement was music. Most persons sang; and many could play upon the harp. After dinner, the Saxon five-stringed harp was passed round; and each took his turn in singing verses to its music. This gave us Caedmon the poet; and Caedmon gave us the first English poem.

5. Weapons.—The men wore long broadswords, and also long daggers. Their shields were made of leather rimmed with iron, and sometimes mounted with bosses of iron or of brass. Many were very skilful in the use of the bow; but this weapon seems to have been first brought into England by the Danes.

thatched, roofed with straw or reeds.
con-true', to find out; to hit upon.
pre-vent', to hinder.
em-broid'er, to ornament with designs in needlework.
truss'-els, movable frames to support a table.

can'-o-py, a covering overhead.
spit, a prong on which meat is roasted.
frag'-ments, pieces broken off.
mant'-le, a kind of loose cloak.
ad-mired', thought much of.
boss, a raised ornament or knob.
skil'-ful, clever.

Tattoo, to make figures on the skin by pricking it and rubbing in colouring matter.

Bear-baiting, provoking and tormenting bears, by setting on dogs to attack them.

28.—OLD-ENGLISH OR SAXON MANNERS AND
CUSTOMS.—II.

1. **The King.**—The head of each kingdom was the Kinsman, or Cyning, or King. The word Cyning means Son of the Kin or Tribe. The little syllable *ing* meant "son of." We find, for example, such statements as "Eoppa was Ising,"—that is, "Eoppa was the son of Isa;" and Alfred the Great was generally called Alfred Ethelwulfing,—that is, Alfred son of Ethelwulf. The king was elected or chosen; but it was the custom to choose him from among the relatives of the king who had just died. He was chosen by the chief council of the kingdom, or Meeting of the Wise Men—or, as it was called in the oldest English, Witena-gemote. The wife of the king was not called the Queen, but The Lady. It is said that a Queen of Wessex once poisoned her husband, and that from that time the title of Queen was given up. Matilda, for example, was crowned not Queen, but "Lady of the English."

2. **The Nobles.**—Next to the king came the Aldermen or Eldermen.¹ These Aldermen had the same rank as our earls, and were placed at the heads of shires. Some of the great earls were placed at the head of those parts of the country which had in older times been separate kingdoms. Thus Godwin was Earl of Wessex, Leofric of

There seems to have been a constant wavering in Old-English between the A and the E. Thus we find Alfred's grandson called Athelstan or Ethelstan; the sons of the royal house called Athelings or Ethelings; and Alfred himself called Alfred, Aelfred, or Elfred. We may compare with this the sound of a in *Pall Mall*. In Scotland and the North of England it is pronounced *PallMall*; in the Midlands, *Pall Mall*; and in London and the south, *Pell Mell*.

Mercia, and Tostig of Northumbria—all of them old kingdoms. The officers who lived at Court and were in attendance on the person of the king had the name of Thanes. The term Thane, however, afterwards became a mere title, and was given to persons who had never even seen the king.

3. The People.—After the Thanes came the Ceorls,—a word which we have changed, both in sound and meaning, into *Churls*,—that is, the farmers or husbandmen. Last of all came the serfs or slaves, who had their ears bored, and their hair cropped close, went about barefooted and bareheaded, and wore iron collars about their necks. The price of a slave was four oxen. Some slaves were permitted by their owners to hire themselves out as workmen, or to engage in trade; and some of these slaves earned money enough to buy themselves off.

4. Parliament.—The word *parliament* is a French word, and did not come into England until it was brought here by the Normans. The Old-English or Saxon parliament was called, as has been said, the Meeting of the Wise Men, or, more shortly, the Wise Men or Witan. It was made up of the nobles or higher land-owners and the upper clergy. It chose the king; it advised the king; and it could put down the king from his seat or throne. Our forefathers were always a free people, and were never at any time the subjects of a tyrant. The Witan had the power of making peace or war, and they could make new laws for the English folk. The king and the Witan together could make bishops, name fast-days and feast-days, and raise taxes. The Witan was also the highest law-court in the country; an Englishman could appeal to it from any court of law.

| | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| syl'-la-ble, a number of letters taken together to form one sound. | cropped close, cut very short. |
| at-tend'-ance, act of waiting on. | per-mitt'-ed, allowed. |
| earn, to get as the reward of labour. | en-gage', to busy one's self with. |

Appeal, to ask that one's case be carried from a lower to a higher court, and tried by that higher court.

29.—OLD-ENGLISH OR SAXON MANNERS AND CUSTOMS.—III.

1. **Agriculture.**—The chief grains grown in the fields of Old-England were rye, wheat, barley, and oats. The plough was made entirely of wood. Oxen and horses were reared; sheep were kept mainly for their fleece; but the chief part of the farm-stock consisted of swine. Large herds of swine were fed in the woods—on the mast of oaks and beeches; and the chief swine-herd was a servant of some importance. A great many bees were kept, for the purpose of making mead out of their honey. Honey was also used to sweeten food, for in those days no sugar came into England from over the sea.

2. **Trades.**—The Old-English handicraftsmen were very few in number, and most of them were slaves. The brewers, the butchers, and the millers (the stone hand-mills were worked by women-slaves), all lived and did their work as slaves on the farm. Beside the kitchen stood the forge of the smith; and the smith could put his hand to almost anything—could make a spear-head, or forge a bolt, or a sword-blade, or the head of a battle-axe, or even turn out a handsome gold ring or necklace. The monks, too, were often excellent workmen—carpenters, builders, architects, goldsmiths, bookbinders; and Dunstan, for example, was a clever painter, a good carver,

and an excellent bell-maker. Glass was first placed in the windows of churches by Biscop, a monk of Jarrow-upon-Tyne. Before his time horn and parchment were used ; and the light which came through them must have been very dim. The English women were so clever at embroidery, that their work was known and highly valued in most of the capitals of Europe.

3. Commerce.—The most thriving commercial town in England has always been London—a great port, which has had ships crossing the seas and sailors to work them from the very earliest times. Athelstan encouraged commerce by passing an act that every Ceorl who was a merchant, and who made three voyages to the Continent in his own ship, should be made a Thane. The chief things exported from this country were tin, iron, lead, and also wool. Slaves were also now and then exported, and were sold in Ireland, in Spain, or even in Africa. Gold, silver, and precious stones—silks, furs, and fine cloths—wines, oils, and drugs,—were imported into England.

4. Books.—There were very few houses that had any books. It was almost solely in the monasteries that books were to be found. Wealthy noblemen might now and then buy books when they had a little money to spare or could afford it. Many of the oldest Saxon or English writers wrote in Latin ; and hence only those who knew Latin could read such books. But English songs and poems passed from mouth to mouth and from memory to memory ; and the young learned from the old to sing of the fierce battles and the brave deeds of their forefathers.

5. Language.—The language spoken by the Saxons, Angles, and Jutes, was English ; but it was very different in sound and in look from the English of to-day. Our newer English is much more easy to pronounce, and has

not so many rough throat-sounds in it as the Old-English of Saxon times. We have also dropped a great many endings, and we have squeezed together words of two syllables into one. Thus the word *apa* has become *ape*; *assa* has been changed into *ass*. The word *hafoc* has been shortened into *hawk*; the word *hagel*¹ into *hail*; and *nagel*¹ into *nail*. A *bird* was called a *brid*; *third* was *thrid*, because it comes from *three*; and people said *urn* for *run*—as they still do down in Devonshire. A *fish* was *fisc*; and *dish* was *disc*. A *berry* was called a *berig*; and *honey* was called *hunig*. *Cloth* was called *clath*; and a *butter-fly* a *buttor-fleōgé*. The *k* in such words as *knife*, *knee*, *knit*, and *knight* was sounded—the Saxon took a good firm grip of them with his throat; and the *h* in *niht* and *miht*—the older spelling of *night* and *might*—was also sounded. But all these words, though different in sound and look, are really the same English words; they differ only as the face of a baby differs from the face of the man the baby has grown into; they differ as the thick sturdy oak differs from the small shoot out of which the oak has grown.

6. Towns and Population.—The towns were very small, and belonged to some king or lord, who taxed them as heavily as he pleased. The chief magistrate was the town-reeve, who corresponded to the shire-reeve (afterwards sheriff), and who sent round men to gather the taxes which the town had to pay, and handed them over to his lord. The towns, however, by slow degrees purchased their freedom from taxes from the different kings, or from their own lords; and thus they became in time entirely self-governing. The population of the whole of England just before the Conquest is supposed to have

¹ *g* must be sounded hard in this word.

been two millions,—and that is only half the present population of London alone. At the present day England contains twenty-five millions of people; and this very large population is increasing every year.

en-tire'-ly, wholly.

hand'-i-crafts-men, workers with their hands.

mast, the fruit of the oak, beech, and other trees.

forge (*noun*), a smithy; the furnace where a smith heats his iron.

forge (*verb*), to make by heating and hammering.

arch'-i-tect, one who plans buildings.

com-mer'-cial, trading.

ex-ported, carried or sent out of the country.

im-ported, carried or brought into the country.

af-ford', to be able to buy.

cor-re-spond'-ed, fitted; suited.

pur'-chase, to buy.

a mil'-lion = 1,000,000 (a thousand thousand).

30.—WILLIAM THE FIRST, CALLED THE CONQUEROR.—I.

1066-1087.—*Reigned 21 years.*

1. Duke William is crowned King.—When the news of the death of Harold reached London, a few of the English nobles met together and chose Edgar the Atheling—a little boy, the grandson of Edmund Ironside,—to be king. But he was too young; there was no grown-up Englishman strong enough and able enough to be leader; and, if there had been one, the English were not sufficiently united to have followed him. Had they united, William of Normandy would never have been king of England. But the English had learned no such lesson—no lesson of union from the battle of Senlac. William resolved to march upon London. Before doing so, however, he took possession of the towns of Dover and Canterbury in the south, and of Winchester in the west;

and he also seized and stopped all the roads that ran to London, so that no troops could march to the help of Edgar and his party.

The men of London saw that it was quite useless to fight against William; on the contrary, they came out to meet him, and brought Edgar with them; and William promised to be their loving lord and king. He was crowned in Westminster Abbey on Christmas-Day of 1066.



William I.

2. William returns to Normandy.—King William the First remained in his new kingdom for about three months; and then, as he thought everything was quiet, he felt he should like to go back to his home in Normandy, and see his wife and children. The Normans were overjoyed to see him. His capital—the good town of Rouen—rang all its joy-bells; the citizens got up grand processions through the streets, gave splendid banquets in the halls, and sang masses of thanksgiving for the victory of their brave and mighty duke. The new King of England, on his side, feasted their eyes with bars of gold, with jewels and gems, with silver and ivory cups, and with robes wrought with gold thread and the richest colours, all of which he had brought from the conquered realm of England.

3. The English Revolt.—When King William sailed from his new kingdom, he had left his half-brother Odo in charge of it. Odo and the Norman nobles looked upon and treated the English as conquered slaves, regarded their wealth as fair booty; and revolt soon broke out. William had to hurry back to England. For nearly five years after he had no rest. He had to march west; he had to hurry north. The men of Wessex loved Harold and hated the slayer of him; and there was a rising in Exeter: the men of York rose and slaughtered the garrison of the city; three thousand soldiers perished to a man; not a single soul escaped. William, who was hunting in the Forest of Dean when the news was brought him, swore “by the splendour of God” that he would take vengeance on Northumbria and the men of Northumbria. The Danish fleet had appeared in the Humber; but he did not fight the Danes: he took Ethelred’s way with them; he gave them a large bribe to go away. And thus the coast was now clear; and then began his terrible vengeance. He laid waste the whole of the fertile vale of York; he burned down every house; he destroyed every blade of corn; he slaughtered every living thing; he broke up and burned every plough, harrow, and spade; and the country was long afterwards called **William’s Desert**. The people who escaped the sword were more wretched than those who had been slain; they were without home and without food; some killed themselves in despair, some sold themselves as slaves—“they bowed their necks in the evil days for bread;” some threw themselves upon the ground, and lay there until they died. That winter, more than a hundred thousand persons perished; for nine years no corn was grown in that land; and for fifty years afterwards most of the

country was still a waste for the distance of sixty miles north of the city of York. Malcolm, the King of the Scots, had married Margaret, the sister of Edgar the Atheling; and he was always ready and eager to seize Northumberland, and to try and set his brother-in-law on the English throne. Edwin and Morcar, the two mighty English earls who had been disappointed by William's action, also took up arms against him.

4. Hereward the Wake.—But the most stubborn resistance came from an Englishman called Hereward the Wake. Hereward was a younger son of the great Leofric, Earl of Mercia, whom Canute had raised to high rank and power. As a boy he was fearless and daring, generally in mischief, and always a terror to his neighbours. At length his own father had to beg the king, Edward the Confessor, to banish him from the kingdom, and to make him an outlaw. To make a man an outlaw in those times was to give leave to any man to kill him; and an outlaw was sometimes called *a wolf's head*, because it was as lawful and as praiseworthy to kill an outlaw as a wolf. Hereward had left England; but when he heard that a French king ruled in the land, and that his father's house and lands had been given to a French knight, he saw only one course before him: he came back. He came back, and with his own hands he killed twelve Normans, whom he found living in his house—in the house that had been left him as an inheritance by his forefathers.

5. The Camp of Refuge.—After this terrible deed he fled to the isle of Ely, in the county now called Cambridgeshire. This was an island, not in the sea, but in the middle of a vast marsh. For miles around the country was a dreary swamp, where no horse could find a footing; and it

was cut in all directions by sluggish streams and winding rivers, or broken by broad meres. Travellers often lost their way in it, and only those who had lived there for a long time knew the right paths. To this swamp,



Hereward defending the Camp of Refuge.

then, came Hereward, Lord of Brunn, and made there a **Camp of Refuge**. To him also came Englishmen who had been deprived of their lands and living by the harsh and haughty Normans, or who hated the conquerors and oppressors of their country; and with this band of fearless, hopeless, and loyal followers, Hereward held his

ground for several years against all the efforts of the Normans to drive him out. William, with the keen eye of a man used to war, saw that there was no chance of defeating the English chief unless he drove a solid causeway right through the middle of the marshy country. In no other way could the Camp of Refuge be taken.

6. The Camp is taken.—Hereward's men were the most active of warriors—they were here, there, and everywhere almost at the same time. They killed the workmen, and burned their huts. They cut off foraging parties, laid ambushes of the most cunning kind, and fell upon small bodies of men. William was almost in despair. At last the monks of Ely showed him one of the paths into the Fens—a path known only to themselves. Along this narrow way a file of Normans pushed in silence through the low brushwood, and surprised the wooden fort of Hereward. A thousand of its brave defenders fell; but Hereward himself escaped, with a few followers. The story goes that he afterwards made friends with the Conqueror, and married a noble Norman lady. King William himself said to his friends that, if there had been five men in England as strong, as brave, and as skilful as Hereward, he could never have sat upon the English throne.

suffic'ient-ly, enough.
u-nit'-ed, joined together.
pro-cess'-ion, slow march of people
with flags and banners.
ban'-quet, a feast.
boot'-y, spoil to be shared.
garr'-i-son, the soldiers for guarding a
fortress.
per'-ished, were destroyed.
splen'-dour, magnificence; glory.
har'-row, a toothed instrument for
breaking the clods in ploughed land.
de-spair', want of hope.
ea'-ger, anxious.

re-sist'-ance, fighting against; not
yielding.
slugg'-ish, slow; lazy.
mere, a pool or lake.
op-press'-or, a person who keeps peo-
ple down.
loy'-al, faithful and obedient; true.
cause'-way, a paved way.
ref'-uge, that which gives shelter.
ac'-tive, busy; quick; nimble.
am'-bush, a party of soldiers hid in
a bush or elsewhere, to take the
enemy by surprise.
sur-prized', took unawares.

Atheling means *member of the royal house*. The suffix *ing* meant *son of*. Thus *Eoppa was Ising* meant *Eoppa was the son of Isa* (among the Saxons, the names of men often ended in *a*). *Athel* means *noble*; and *Atheling* means therefore *a son of nobles*. But it gradually came to be used only by the royal house of Wessex and other Saxon kingdoms.

Forest of Dean, in Gloucestershire, on the west of the Severn.

File. A line of soldiers ranged the one behind the other.

Wake, watchful. Hereward was called *the Wake*, because he was ever *on the watch*.

PEACE TO THE SLUMBERERS.

1. Peace to the slumberers !

They lie on the battle-plain,
With no shroud to cover them ;
The dew and the summer rain
And wild wind sweep over them.—
Peace to the slumberers !

2. Vain was their bravery !

The fallen oak lies where it lay
Across the wintry river ;
But brave hearts once swept away,
Are gone, alas ! for ever.—
Vain was their bravery !

3. Woe to the conqueror !

Our limbs shall lie as cold as theirs
Of whom his sword bereft us,
Ere we forget the weight—the cares
Of vengeance they have left us !—
Woe to the conqueror !

THOMAS MOORE.

slum'-ber-er, a sleeper.
shroud, the dress of the dead.

be-reft', robbed.
venge'-ance, punishment for injury.

31.—WILLIAM THE FIRST, CALLED THE
CONQUEROR.—II.1066-1087.—*Reigned 21 years.*

1. **Feudalism.**—This is an odd word ; but it is a very simple thing. It means that persons who owned or held lands did not pay rent in money or in parts of their crops ; but that they were ready to give so many days' fighting of so many men every year. This was looked upon as rent for the land. The king was supposed to be the owner of all the land in England. If he gave or let so many thousands of acres to an earl, that earl had to keep in readiness so many knights and soldiers to fight for the king. If, again, the earl gave or let so many hundred acres to one of his barons or knights, it was because that baron or knight promised to keep ready so many soldiers or archers to fight under their lord. If, again, one of these barons gave or let so many acres to a yeoman, it was because that yeoman promised to be ready to come into the field and fight whenever he was called upon. The yeoman was the vassal of the knight, the knight of the earl, the earl of the king ; and in this way there was an unbroken tie or bond between all ranks, which bound them together on the basis of war and land.

2. **Homage.**—When a lord received land from the king, he knelt down before him, clasped his hands, placed them between the hands of the king, and swore to be his *man* with life and limb, for life or death. This was called *homage*,—a word which is made out of the French word *homme*, which means *man*. William feared that those who had done homage to his barons for their lands would be more faithful to their own lords than to him, and might

even fight against him, if the lords took it into their heads to rebel. He therefore called on all persons who held lands in England to meet him at Salisbury, and to take an oath to himself that they would be loyal and faithful to him—and to him alone. He thought, that, in this way, if they broke their oath, he could punish them as traitors; and it seemed to him that thus he had every man in England in his power—that thus he held them all under his hand. In this way it was that the Feudal System came into England. The Feudal System means, then, the holding of land by giving service and labour during time of war. Thus society in William's time, and for four centuries after, was founded upon war and fighting, and not upon work and peace,—upon readiness to attack one's neighbours, not upon steady work and settled peace.

3. William's Plans for keeping Power.—To keep all the power in his own hand, King William took care that no Norman noble should hold too much land. Again, he was not allowed to hold all his land in one county; for then he might have been able to bring together too many men to one place to fight for himself. William also built castles in the towns, and filled them with soldiers of his own. One of these castles was built in London, and it is now known as the Tower of London. It is one of the oldest castles in England; it is still a storehouse of war, and at present is full of armour, guns, pistols, and even the newest kind of rifles.

4. Archbishop Lanfranc.—William, when in Normandy, had had a great deal of trouble with his quarrelsome barons; and in England, too, he was far from being free from annoyance. In all his troubles, however, he had always had one friend who stood by him; and this friend was Lanfranc, whom he made Archbishop of Canterbury. Lanfranc was by birth an Italian, and had been

a lawyer, but was now one of the most learned priests in Europe. He not only gave good advice to William, and helped him in many ways; but he ruled the Church well. He would not allow a priest to be ignorant, or to fall into lazy habits, or to be hurried or careless about his work. Some of the Saxon monks had grown to be dull, slow, stupid,—even great gluttons and dreary drunkards; but Lanfranc stirred up these men, urged them to labour, would not allow this kind of conduct, and showed them that there was a much higher life than that which consists in eating and drinking.

trai'-tor, a person who betrays a trust
he has promised to protect.
sys'-tem, way of arranging things.

ser'-vice, labour for another.
an-noy'-ance, trouble; vexation.
glutt'-on, one who eats too much.

Vassal, one who held land and paid for it by fighting for his superior lord.
Italian, one born in Italy, a country in the south of Europe.

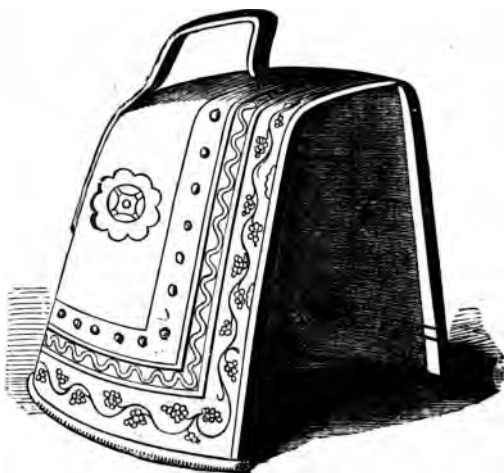
32.—WILLIAM THE FIRST, CALLED THE CONQUEROR.—III.

1066-1087.—Reigned 21 years.

1. **Three New Things.**—Though King William promised the people that he would rule the land by the laws and customs of the English, yet he introduced a number of new things. The most important new things given by him to England and the English were **The Curfew**, the **Doomsday-Book**, and the **New Forest**.

2. **The Curfew.**—The Curfew was a large metal cover—in shape somewhat like a coal-scuttle—which was used to *cover* or put out the fire. The Curfew Bell was

a bell rung every evening—at sunset in summer, and at eight o'clock in winter—as a signal for the people to cover up their fires and retire to rest. This custom was one which was very useful, and which had existed for centuries in several parts of the continent of Europe. Most of the houses in which people lived at that time



The Curfew or Fire-cover.

were built not of stone or brick, but of wood ; and it was a very right thing that people should know that all fires and lights in their neighbours' houses were out before they went to bed, and that the chance of fire breaking out in the dead of night, and of them and their children being burned out of house and home, was very small.

Solemnly, mournfully, dealing its dole,
The Curfew Bell is beginning to toll.

Cover the embers, and put out the light ;
Toil comes with the morning, and rest with the night.

Dark grow the windows, and quenched is the fire ;
Sound fades into silence,—all footsteps retire.

No voice in the chambers, no sound in the hall !
Sleep and oblivion reign over all !

3. The Domesday-Book.—Another new thing which William began in England was a list of all the men, lands, and cattle in the country. This list was called the Domesday-Book. The king wanted to know how many fighting men there were in the kingdom, how much land every noble or knight or other vassal of his held, and what the exact size and value of each piece of land was. So he sent clerks into every part of England ; and these clerks did their work so thoroughly, that there was not a head of cattle or an acre of ground left out of the list. Nay, more, “there was not an ox, nor a cow, nor a pig passed by.” These lists were copied into a large parchment book in two volumes, which was called the Domesday-Book. This book is now in the library of the British Museum ; and from it we know more about the state of England in the eleventh century than from all other books put together.

4. The New Forest.—Another new thing—and this was not a good thing—that he gave to England was the New Forest. He was very fond—much too fond of hunting. But though he was so fond of hunting himself, he was not generous about it—he would not allow other people to hunt. “He loved the high deer,” says the old Saxon chronicle, “as if he were their father ;” and so, in certain parts of England he would let no one hunt except

himself. Whoever killed a hart or a hind was condemned to have his eyes put out. In order that he might have plenty of room to hunt and ride in, he destroyed sixty villages in Hampshire, between Winchester and the sea-coast; pulled down cottages and farmhouses; and made hundreds and even thousands of people homeless. The vale of York he wasted for reasons of policy and war; the New Forest he wasted for his own private and personal greed and pleasure.

5. Death of William.—As King William grew older, he grew also much stouter. One day the King of France made a coarse jest about his great size; this was reported by some friend to the King of England; and William vowed that he would make him rue it. So, in the autumn of 1087, he marched into France, burning and destroying crops, houses, gardens, orchards, and everything he met with on his march. When at length he reached the old city of Mantes,¹ he ordered it to be set on fire; and after the fire had done its work, he was riding up a narrow street of the city, when his horse stepped upon a hot cinder, and suddenly reared. William's heavy body was thrown with great force against the high steel pommel of his saddle; and by the great and sudden shock he was very badly hurt. His men carried him to his capital of Rouen; and there, after suffering great pain both of body and mind, he died six weeks after.

6. How he left his Lands.—As he lay upon his deathbed, he sent for his three sons, told them of all his great sins and grievous faults, and begged and prayed that they would take warning by him and learn in time. Then he told them how he meant to divide what he possessed, and said to them: "I leave Normandy to

¹ Pronounced Maungt.

Robert, my eldest son ; but I fear much lest he rule it ill. The crown of England I won by my sword, and I dare not leave it to any one. But if my second son William is chosen king by the English, I hope that God will make him a blessing to the people." "And what," cried Henry, the youngest son, "will you leave to me, father?" "Five thousand pounds," replied the king. "But I have no land," answered Henry. "Fear not," said William, "the day will come when you will rule over much land, and be a greater king than I or either of your brothers." The dying king then gave his sons his blessing, left orders that all prisoners and captives should be set free, and divided among the clergy and the poor the large treasure of gold and silver that he had hoarded. The great bell of the Cathedral of Rouen was ringing out for morning service ; and as the bell sent forth its strong clear tones, the strong, bold, proud spirit of William left its earthly dwelling. His body was buried at Caen,¹ in the church of St Stephen's.

7. William's Character and Government.—No one of his sons was present at his funeral ; not one of his kinsfolk helped to lay him in his grave ; and this fact speaks volumes of itself. He was a man whom all might fear, but whom very few were able to love. An old English writer says that William "was mild to good men, but terrible and stark to men that withstood his will ;" and that all were obliged to obey him, "if they would have lands or even life." He would not allow the Norman barons to plunder or oppress the English ; and hence the English folk, though they did not quite love him, hated him much less than they hated the Norman barons. They often talked of "the good peace he had made in the

¹ Pronounced Caung.

land, so that a man might walk from end to end with his bosom filled with gold.'

in-tro-duced', brought into.

em'-bera, red-hot ashes.

quenched, put out.

cham'-ber, a private room.

ob-liv'-i-on, forgetfulness.

li'-bra-ry, a room for holding books.

pol'-i-cy, course of action in matters of state.

pri'-vate, belonging to one person.

jest, a joke.

re-port'-ed, told again.

rear, to stand on its hind legs.

sudd'-en, quick ; unexpected.

shock, a great shake.

griev'-ous, causing grief.

treas'-ure, wealth ; riches stored up.

hoard, to store up.

stark, stiff.

Dole, a small part ; something given in charity.

Dealing its dole, giving out slowly in small parts.

British Museum, the large national Museum in London.

Pommel, the knob or ball in front of the saddle. It was very high in Norman saddles ; and was sometimes used for hanging the sword on.

The Curfew Bell was a signal for the covering of fires. It is still rung in many places in England and Scotland at eight o'clock in the evening.

BURIAL OF THE CONQUEROR.

1. Lowly upon his bier

The royal conqueror lay ;
Baron and chief stood near,
Silent, in war array.

2. And, by the torch's blaze,

The stately priest had said
High words of power and praise,
To the glory of the dead.

3. They lowered him with the sound

Of requiems to repose ;

When from the throngs around
A solemn voice arose.

4. "Forbear, forbear," it cried,
"In the Holiest Name forbear;
He hath conquered regions wide,
But he shall not slumber there.
5. "By the home e'en here o'erthrown,
On my children's native spot;
Hence, with his dark renown
Cumber our birthplace not!"
6. Shame glowed on each dark face,
Of those proud and steel-girt men;
And they bought with gold a place
For their leader's dust e'en then.
7. One deep voice thus arose
From a heart that wrongs had riven;
Ah! who shall number those
That were only heard in heaven?

MRS HEMANS (*abridged*).

bier, a frame of wood for bearing the
dead to the grave.
ar-ray', dress.
state'-ly, grand; dignified.
re-pose', to rest.

throng, crowd.
re'-gion, country.
re-nown', great name; fame.
cum'-ber, trouble.
riv'-en, torn asunder.

Requiem, a service sung for the *quiet* or rest of the souls of the dead.
Steel-girt, with steel armour on.

33.—WILLIAM II., CALLED RUFUS OR "THE RED."

1087-1100.—*Reigned 13 years.*

1. **The Second Norman King.**—William the Red or Rufus received this nickname, both because he had a very ruddy face, and because he had red hair. He was not the eldest son of William; he was only the third son



William II.

of the Conqueror, and the second of his sons still living. The Wise Men did, as his father wished and expected, choose him king; and he was crowned by his father's friend, Archbishop Lanfranc. Quite as able a man as his father, he was also as fearless and as obstinate; but he was not so fair-

minded or so just. In fact, he was very greedy of money, and he would do anything to get it. He never failed in anything he tried; and if he had made up his mind to do anything, he did it.

2. **A King cannot be drowned.**—Once when he was hunting in the New Forest, and his brother Robert was in the Holy Land, news was brought him of a revolt of the people in Normandy. He stopped the hunt, turned his horse's head to the sea, and, spurring fiercely, gal-

loped down to the coast, and ordered out a boat. A furious storm was ploughing up the Channel; the waves were rolling almost mountains high, and the sailors refused to put out. "What!" he cried, "did you ever hear of a king being drowned?" And he sternly ordered the sailors to get the boat ready and to put to sea; embarked with them, and reached the coast of Normandy in safety.

3. The English favour Rufus.—Many of the Norman barons would much rather have had Robert, the Conqueror's eldest son, for their king. They knew Robert to be an easy man—careless, generous, not too strict, somewhat harebrained—and they thought that if he were king, they could do just as they pleased in England. What they would please would be to oppress the English, to get as much money as they could out of them, and to make slaves of them, if they were able. But the English did not favour Robert; they rallied in thousands round William the Second, for they knew well that one king was better than a hundred tyrants. Odo, who was the half-brother of the Conqueror, and a man who hated the English, placed himself at the head of the Norman barons. The first William had made him Earl of Kent; and after some fighting in that part of England, he and his friends shut themselves up in the castle of Rochester. He was, however, besieged in the castle, and at length obliged to give himself up; and he and his followers marched out of the stronghold amid the curses and hisses of the men and women of Kent. "Gallows and the cord for the traitor bishop! A halter for my lord the bishop! Hang up him and all his men!" were the shouts that filled his ears, as he marched with down-cast eyes and sullen tread out of the gates and through the town.

4. The Firebrand.—The good and able Archbishop Lanfranc died in 1089; and William was left without a man to guide him aright and give him sound advice. Left to himself, William took as his chief adviser a low-born and low-bred Norman, called Ralph, who received from his French countryman the nickname of Flambard, or The Firebrand. William made this man his private chaplain, and also appointed him judge. The Firebrand was far from being a just judge. He took bribes, whenever and wherever he could get them, both for himself and for his master—in fact, he forced people to give him bribes; and the English used to say that he would take the halter from the neck of a robber if the robber could pay for his life. But William's chief means of getting money was a very simple one. When a bishop or abbot died, he refused to fill up the bishopric or the abbacy—he refused to make a new bishop or a new abbot, and he put in his own pocket the money which came in yearly for these offices. So far did he carry this unjust plan of his, that there were in England at the time of his death one archbishopric, four bishoprics, and eleven abbeys without heads to rule them.

5. Anselm.—One time William Rufus was very ill; and it was only when he was very ill that he had any conscience at all. He felt very much afraid; he feared he was going to die; and his friends about him urged him to fill up the Archbishopric of Canterbury, which had stood empty for four years. They told him Anselm, a good and pious Italian, was the best man. Anselm was sent for, but he refused to take the post. He was dragged to the bedside of the king; and the men who waited upon William forced the poor man's hands open, so that the crosier, which is the mark of a bishop's power and

labour, might be thrust into them : and in this way it was that Anselm was made Archbishop of Canterbury. After a time, however, the king got better ; the good Anselm was obliged to resist the king in his wickedness and injustice ; and William's hatred compelled him to flee from the kingdom.

6. William's Death (1100).—No one knows exactly how William the Red came by his death. He was hunting in the New Forest ; and the common story is that a knight, called Walter Tyrrel, shot an arrow at a passing deer—that the arrow grazed a tree, glanced off, and passed through the heart of the king. This may be true ; but it may also well have been that one of the unhappy men—one of the wretched cotters who had been driven out of their homes to make the New Forest, and whose wives and children had died of hunger—lay in wait behind a tree for his revenge, and took the life of the son of the man who had, by his actions, thoughtlessly done to death these poor innocent creatures. Henry, his brother, was one of the hunting-party ; but he did not much care—he did not even wait to take charge of his brother's body. He deserted the dead body of his brother as he had deserted the lifeless body of his father. He put spurs to his horse, galloped to Winchester, and took possession of the **Hoard of Winchester**—the vast sum of money that was lying in that city. The body of Rufus was left lying on the ground, forsaken by all, until it was picked up by a poor charcoal-burner of the Forest, placed in his cart, and driven slowly to Winchester. In the church of this old capital of England it was buried, alone and untended, without friends, without ceremony, and without mourning.

ob'-stin-ate, stubborn ; unyielding.

re-volt', a rebellion.

em-bark', to go on board ship.

hare-brained', foolish and loose in thinking and acting.

strong'-hold, a fortified place ; a castle.

bribe, something given to a judge to induce him to give an unjust judgment.

thrust, pushed by force.

graze, to pass lightly over the surface.

in'-no-cent, not hurtful ; blameless.

de-sert'-ed, left ; forsook.

char'-coal, coal made by *charring* or

slowly burning *wood* under turf, so

as to keep the open air from it.

un-tend'-ed, not taken care of.

cer'-e-mo-ny, sacred observance.

Crosier was a staff with a cross on the top of it. It was the sign of the dignity and authority of a bishop.

Charcoal-burner. There was no coal dug in England at this time ; and wood and charcoal were very much in use.

THE DEATH OF RUFUS.

1. The wood in the calm fair sunset
Blazed with a fiery light ;
O'er ruined church and hamlet
Came slowly on the night.
2. High o'er the rest, like monarchs,
The oaks, hoar monsters, stood ;
No eye may pierce the darkness,
The blackness of the wood.
3. Like the roof of some great temple
Their old mossed boughs were spread ;
Scarce could the sun's last glory
Stream through the shade o'erhead.
4. A deer burst forth in panic
At the savage laugh and song ;
Hounds from the leash are parted,
The hunters sweep along.

5. In the forest glade stands Rufus,
Intent on sylvan prize ;
From the parting rays of sunlight
The monarch veils his eyes.

6. "Shoot, Tyrrel, shoot !" he thunders ;
Swift came the glancing dart ;
It has pierced the crownéd hunter,
It quivers in his heart.

7. To the gate of the fair White City
Comes the charcoal-burner's wain ;
It brings no hart for abbot's board,
It brings the royal slain.

WALTER THORNBURY.

ham'-let, a small village.

hoar, greyish white, either with age or
with frost.

pan'-ic, great and sudden fear.

in-tent', attending closely to.

syl'-van, woody ; living in woods.

quiv'-er, to shake slightly.

wain, a waggon.

hart, a stag or deer.

Pierce here means *to see through*.

Leash, the line or *lash* by which hawks or hounds were held.

Sylvan prize, that is, deer.

34.—HENRY THE FIRST, CALLED BEAUCLERC OR "FINE SCHOLAR."—I.

1100-1135.—*Reigned 35 years.*

1. Henry makes Promises to the English.—Henry knew very well that the Norman barons, as soon as they heard of William's death, would be eager to have his eldest brother Robert, and not himself, to be their king.

Not only did they prefer the careless Robert; but their notion was that it would be a capital thing for them

if Normandy and England were to be united under one ruler. Robert, however, was far away from home on a Crusade; and so he was not able to help them in this desire. Henry, therefore, resolved to make hay while the sun shone; and he lost no time in trying to gain the goodwill of the English people.



Henry I.

With this purpose, he promised them a number of good things.

2. His Three Promises.—Among these good things there were three of great value to the English folk. (i.) First, he promised that he would rule the people justly and well; would not put heavy taxes upon them; and would do away with the evil customs that had sprung up in the reign of the Red King. (ii.) Secondly, he promised that he would respect the property of the Church, and would not rob it in any way. (iii.) Thirdly, he said that he would bring back and put in force the good and mild laws of “the good King Edward”—that is, of Edward the Confessor. All these promises were correctly and neatly written on several sheets of parchment, which were fastened together: and the whole was then signed by the

king. This set of parchment-sheets so signed was called a Charter.

3. The First Charter.—This charter is one for which all Englishmen and Englishwomen should be very thankful; because it is the first of a long series of charters by which the rights of the English people were made safe, and by which the liberties of the English people were guarded against the attacks of both king and nobles. To show that he was quite in earnest about all this, he turned the Firebrand out of his service, and threw him into the Tower; and he also sent for Archbishop Anselm to come back.

4. Henry marries Edith of Scotland.—But Henry did more. He proved his good faith to the English folk by marrying one of themselves: he married a princess of English blood. The lady was Edith, the daughter of Malcolm, King of Scotland. Malcolm, it will be remembered, had married Margaret, the sister of Edgar the Atheling; and Edgar was the great-grandson of the English King Ethelred the Unready. On her marriage with Henry, she gave up her name of Edith, and took the new name of Matilda or Maud; and she was so much beloved by the English, that she was, both during her life and long after her death, known as Maud the Good or the Good Queen Maud. This marriage pleased the English people greatly; for in it they saw the lines of the Norman and the Saxon united—the English line of Cerdic and Alfred joined to the Norwegian line of Rolf and William the Conqueror. The poorest peasant could understand the marriage, and could see that Henry had come over to the English side.

5. Robert invades England.—When Robert, the eldest son of the Conqueror, returned from his Crusade, and heard that Henry, his younger brother, had been made

King of England, he was very angry. Aided by many of the Norman barons, both in Normandy and England, he raised an army, sailed across the Channel, and landed at Pevensey,—at the very spot where his father had landed before him. On this occasion, however, he found himself face to face with a strong English army; he could make no headway against Henry; and he was compelled to retreat.

6. Henry invades Normandy.—Soon after, Henry put himself at the head of a strong English army, and in his turn invaded Normandy. The two brothers met on the field of **Tenchebray**,¹ and the English king defeated the forces of Duke Robert, and utterly broke the power of the duchy of Normandy. Here, then, just forty years after the famous date of 1066, an English army, led by a King of England, made up for the loss of the battle of Hastings, and defeated a Norman army led by a Norman duke upon Norman soil. And thus Normandy was forced to take the second place, and to become a dependency on the English crown; whereas, in the time of Duke William, England had filled the inferior place, and had been a dependency of the Norman dukedom. The Channel Islands formed part of this dukedom of Normandy; and these islands are now the only part of France which still belongs to this kingdom of England.

pre-fer', to choose rather than something else; to think more of.
cap'i-tal, first-rate; very good.
re-solved', decided.
re-spect', to honour.
cor-rect'-ly, without a mistake.
sign, to write one's name at the foot of a paper.
ser'-i-es, a number of things of the

same kind.
guard'-ed, taken care of; protected.
aid'-ed, helped; assisted.
re-treat', to go back.
duch'-y, } the country ruled over
duke'-dom, } by a duke.
de-pend'-en-cy, something subject or under.
in-fer'-i-or, lower.

¹ Pronounced Tongshēbray.

Charter, a grant of lands, houses, rights, or liberties made by a king. Such grants were written on parchment or *paper* (in Latin, *charta*).

Crusade, a holy war undertaken to free the Holy Places in Palestine from the hands of the Turk. The term comes from the French word for a *cross*. The warriors wore a cross as a badge. The cross of England was yellow or gold; of France, white or silver; of Italy, blue; of Spain, red; of Scotland, a St Andrew's cross; and of the Knights Templars, red on white.

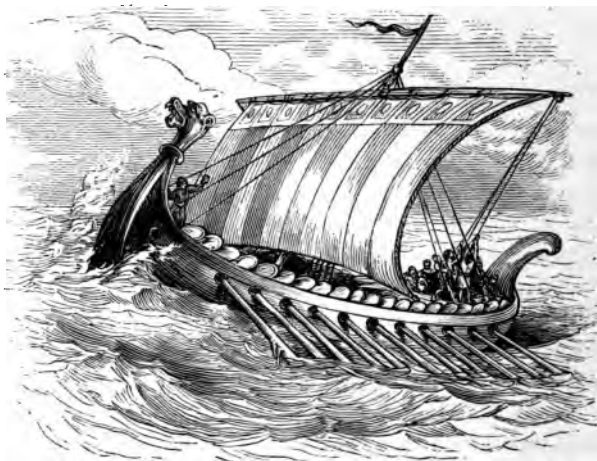
35.—HENRY THE FIRST, CALLED BEAUCLERC OR "FINE SCHOLAR."—II.

1100-1135.—*Reigned 35 years.*

1. **Anselm comes back.**—Henry, as has been said, sent for Archbishop Anselm to come back; and Anselm was very glad to return. He thought he would now be able to do some good to England and the Church, to put the Church to rights, and to guide it to good ends. Henry wanted to keep in his own hands the power of making and of ruling bishops; but Anselm declared that all the bishops of England must be obedient to the head-bishop of them all—that is, the Pope. And so it happened that another quarrel arose between archbishop and king, and Anselm was again forced to leave England. This time he stayed away for three years; but at last the quarrel was made up, and Anselm came back once more. He did a great deal for the poor, much for learning, very much for the Church; and all men mourned with deep grief when Anselm died.

2. **The White Ship (1120).**—Henry I. had an only son, William, whom he loved dearly, and whom the English people called by an endearing English name—**William the Atheling**. They called him this because

his mother was of the Old-English royal house, and not of the new Norman line; and they had also strong hopes that, when he came to reign, he would show himself to be a true English king. Henry had, in the year 1120, gone over to Normandy, and taken with him his son that he might receive the homage of the Norman barons. When returning, it happened that father and son sailed in separate ships. The son chose a fast sailer called the **White Ship**. He and the young nobles, his com-



The White Ship.

panions, gave the sailors a great deal of wine before starting; and every one on board was very merry—too merry, in fact, to know exactly what they were about. In the dead of the night, the ship struck upon a rock; and though an attempt was made to save William, at length the ship and her boats sank together, and all were drowned, except

one man. This man, a butcher named Berold, came to Court and told the sad story; and when Henry heard it, he fell speechless to the ground, and it is said that he was never seen to smile again. By the wreck of the White Ship, Henry's hopes for the passing on of the crowns of England and Normandy were utterly destroyed. Now, not his own son, but the son of Robert was his rightful heir. Henry could not endure this—he could not brook that all for which he had laboured and toiled should go to the son of a man who, though a brother, had been his enemy through his whole life. What was he to do?

3. Henry's Daughter.—He had still one child—a daughter called Matilda, who had married Henry V., Emperor of Germany. She was very young when she was married; and so little that she could not stand up under the weight of the jewels she wore as a bride, but had to be carried. Soon after the marriage her husband died, and Matilda came back as a widow to the Court of her father. This lady her father resolved to make his heir. Now a woman on the throne seemed strange to these stern feudal barons; for they were used to see their king taking his place at the head of the army, directing the troops, and leading them to victory. But, unwilling as they were, at length barons and priests alike were induced—some by threats, some by force, and some by gold—to swear that they would accept Matilda as their future queen and mistress. Then Henry gave her in marriage for the second time. He married her to Geoffrey the Handsome, the son of the Count of Anjou, the most powerful noble in all France, and the only enemy whom Henry really feared. The son of Geoffrey and Matilda was called Henry Plantagenet; and he after-

wards became Henry the Second of England. And in this way it came about that the English crown passed into the hands of a French family.

4. The Rise of Towns.—Soon after the conquest of England by William the First, a peaceful invasion of England by French traders and workmen of different classes took place. Many of the townsfolk of Rouen found out that London was a better place for trade and for work than any town in France; and they came over here and settled in the City. Some of them settled in other English towns; and at Norwich the Frenchmen had a separate quarter of the town set apart for them to live in. But in London many of the Norman citizens became leading men, and were elected to the highest offices. Such a man was Gilbert Becket, who rose to be Mayor of London—or, as the office was then called, Portreeve. He was the father of one of the greatest men that England ever produced, of whom we shall read in a future chapter. Under Henry the First, the towns of England rose rapidly in wealth and strength; and he helped their growth in many ways.

5. Death of Henry.—Henry died in Normandy on the 1st of December 1135. He was rather too much given to good eating; he was very fond of a rich fish called the lamprey, and would sometimes eat too many. The lamprey was looked upon as a royal dish; and it was a custom in the city of Gloucester to offer to the king a lamprey-pie when he came to visit the city. Of such a dish Henry, on one occasion, ate too much, and he became ill and died. He died in Normandy; but his body was carried to England, and buried in the Abbey of Reading, on the banks of the Thames. Henry's just and firm rule had done much good to England. He took

care to be fair to all and to protect the rights of all, so that the English long spoke of him as the "Lion of Justice." He gave a Charter—or Bill of Rights written upon parchment—to the city of London, and also to many other boroughs. And he helped on the growing trades and industries of the country in every way that he was able.

de-clare', to make known.

en-dure', to bear.

brook, bear to think.

la'-bour, to work very hard.

ac-cept', receive; take.

con'-quest, getting by force.

towns'-folk, people living in a town.

sep'-ar-ate, apart from others.

e-lect'-ed, chosen.

pro-duce', to yield; to bring forth.

Anjou (pronounced *angzhoo*), a province in the west of France, near the middle of the country.

Mayor is another form of the Latin word *major*, greater. The mayor is the chief magistrate in a city or borough.

Portreeve is the *governor of the port*. But the Portreeve also governed the city.

Lamprey, a kind of fish somewhat like an eel.

Borough meant originally a strong post or place of protection. It now means a town which has the right of sending a member to Parliament.

THE WHITE SHIP.

1120.

1. King Henry ruled this English land,
And was also Duke of the Norman strand.
2. One year to the shores of France sailed he
To claim of the Normans fealty.
3. William the Atheling with him went:
They sailed from the fair white shores of Kent.
4. And now the day of return has come—
The day when the King must sail for home.

5. Said the Prince : " Let my father go on before ;
Ere we start I shall feast with my friends once more.
6. " Your ships are heavy ; our bark is light :
Here in the harbour we'll dance to-night.
7. " We've forty casks of wine on board—
Of Burgundy and Graves¹ a hoard ;
And we'll drink, and sing, and sport, and dance,
Ere we leave the shores of sunny France.
8. " Ho ! wine for the sailors from below !
Let them drink as hard as they will row !
Our ship shall outspeed my father's flight,
Though we sail from the port at dead of night ! "
9. The rowers and sailors made good cheer :
What cared they a jot though none could steer !
The lords and ladies danced and sang
Till the harbour rocks with the echoes rang !
10. And then they blithely put to sea,
Filled with strong wine and boundless glee—
All flushed with wine each seaman's brow,
As the cold waves whitened before the prow.
11. " Give way ! " the pilot cried aloud,
As the moon sank 'neath a sable shroud.
" And set all sail ! " the captain cried,
As he thought of his noble ship with pride.
12. Swifter and swifter the White Ship sped—
Soon will they see the morning red.

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¹ Pronounced Gráv.

13. What sound is that? 'Tis the jarring shock
Of the White Ship's keel on a sunken rock.
14. The moon crept out from her cloudy veil,
And marked the King's ship with a gleam of sail.
"I hear a cry," said the King in his ship;
"'Tis the shriek"—said one—"of the mews as they
dip."
15. Oh the cheek of the bravest is haggard and pale!
And strong men falter, and women wail!
There are prayers and shrieks on the air that ring,
For to die on the sea is a fearful thing!
16. The White Ship fills; and to the brink
The water has risen; she needs must sink.
17. Oh pale and paler the ladies' cheeks!
And the night is filled with thousand shrieks!
18. But the captain has let down his little boat,
And the Prince and he are again afloat.
19. Safe! Safe: . . . What cry has reached his ear?
A cry of anguish and of fear.
He hears that voice; he knows that cry—
"Put back! put back! she must not die!"
20. The sturdy captain rows him back;
They near the sinking crowd and wrack.
The sister leaps to her brother's arms:
Now is she safe from death and harms!
21. "Thou art safe, my sister, safe with me;
This boat might live in a rougher sea!"

22. But who can be strong in mortal fear?
Men do what they can when death is near :—
They leap to the boat, though the gulf grows wide ;
They buffet the waves and cling to the side.
Many pass in ; and the boat is small ;
It sinks in the wave and bears down all.
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23. O'er the English son of the Norman King
The billows their low sad dirges sing.
24. Two men a spar from the White Ship grasped,
And in the cold water for breath they gasped—
One Berold the butcher ; and one a knight
Who Geoffrey of the Eagle hight.
25. And a third, the captain, rose on the sea
And cried, "The Prince—Oh where is he?"
26. "He is lost!" they said ; and in still despair
He sank 'neath the wave with a death-fixed stare.
27. For long, long hours they held to the mast,
And ships in the offing sailed on and passed.
Till the Knight of the Eagle, all spent his strength,
Sank from the slippery spar at length.
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28. But a fishing-boat in the dawn's first grey
Saved Berold from death, as afloat he lay.
And a priest led the butcher to the King
To tell the news he had to bring.
29. But none dared tell the awful tale ;
The palace was filled with a sad low wail,
And every cheek was blanched and pale.

30. And now and then the King would say
 "What keeps my boy so long away?"
31. The King sat in his room alone—
 All silent save for his deep low moan.
32. No man dared look him in the face ;
 No man dared sue him for a grace ;
 No man go to him in his place.
33. At last a page goes to his room
 To tell the King of his son's sad doom.
 "Oh why, little page, do you come to me ?
 Hast news of my son when he crossed the sea?"
34. "Yea : news, O King, sad news I have ;
 Your son is——drowned in the salt sea-wave."
35. King Henry heard and bowed his head ;
 Not one word of woe he said ;
 But sank in his chair as he were dead.
36. And from that day till his death, I ween,
 No smile on his face was ever seen.

GRANT.

| | |
|---|---|
| fe'-al-ty , the oath sworn by the vassal to be faithful to his lord. | ang'-uish , great pain of body or mind. |
| blithe'-ly , merrily. | wrack , wreck or shipwreck. |
| pi'-lot , one who guides a ship in and out of harbour. | shel'-ter , protection ; refuge. |
| sa'-ble , black ; dark. | dirge , a funeral song. |
| | blanched , white. |
| | doom , ruin. |
| | jarr'-ing , making a harsh rattling sound. |

Burgundy, an ancient province of France, in the middle, towards the east, famous for its wines.

Graves (pronounced *Gráv*), a kind of white wine

Mews, sea-birds ; gulls.

Hight, an old word which means *was called*.

Sue him for a grace, ask him for a favour.

36.—STEPHEN OR MATILDA.—I.

1135-1154.—*Stephen reigned 19 years ; Matilda, 8 months.*

1. **The Claims of Stephen.**—The long peace which the strong rule of Henry had made throughout the land came



Stephen.

to an end at his death. A quarrel arose between the two claimants to the crown, **Stephen** and **Matilda**, which produced the greatest misery both to rich and poor through the length and breadth of the country—a quarrel which was put an end to only by the appearance of

another Henry,—Henry the Second. Stephen, Count of Blois,¹ was the son of Adëla, daughter of William the Conqueror. Hence he was William's grandson.

2 **The Claims of Matilda.**—Matilda was, as we have seen, the daughter of Henry the First ; and she had been named queen by her father, and had been accepted as their future queen by the barons. Among the other barons, Stephen also had himself taken the oath. But, even before Henry I. had been carried to his grave, Stephen had forgotten his oath, had marched to the

¹ Pronounced Blō-ä. Blois is a town in the middle of France, on the river Loire, west of Orleans.

gates of the city of London, and had asked the citizens to take him for their king. He also seized the vast treasures gathered together by Henry. Stephen had always been a great favourite in London; had often dined and chatted with the London merchants; and every one liked the gay, handsome, smiling Norman baron. The citizens of London met in council, chose Stephen king "for the good of the realm," and offered to spend their gold and their blood at his bidding.

3. Matilda's Party.—Matilda did not at once take up arms for her cause; she remained in Normandy till the year 1139. Then, when she heard that Stephen had quarrelled with the Church and had lost the friendship of the priests and bishops, she left France, crossed the Channel, and landed at Portsmouth. Her general and chief adviser was her half-brother, a Norman called Robert of Caen, who was afterwards created Earl of Gloucester. The west of England was on the side of the ex-Empress Matilda. Her chief helper in the north was her uncle David, King of Scotland. He, whose true work was building abbeys and planting flowers—not leading soldiers to war—took up arms in favour of his niece, and marched a large body of troops into Yorkshire; but was miserably defeated in the **Battle of the Standard** in 1138.

4. Stephen's Party.—Many of the Norman barons did not like the idea of obeying a woman, or of swearing to her to be her "liege man of life and limb." Besides, there had never been a queen in England before. In addition to all this, it was the custom in those times for the king to lead his army to battle, and to direct the fighting and the movements of the different bodies of troops; and this they knew could not be done by a woman. So the barons were, most of them, on the side

of Stephen. London and the east of England also supported his claims.

5. The Barons on Neither Side.—But, indeed, the barons were not very hearty either for Stephen or for the queen—they were more on their own side than on that of either; and they were very glad to see the two claimants to the throne quarrelling and fighting. The weaker the power of the ruling sovereign, the stronger grew the power of the barons, and the more easy it was for them to do as they liked in the part of the country in which they lived and had their estates. Very few of these Norman lords cared a straw for either Stephen or Matilda. As long as the two chief persons in the kingdom were fighting for the crown, they felt that they could do as they pleased. Even had Stephen been king alone, with all the sovereign power for himself, he had not the strength of will to keep his barons in order; and the barons were always very glad not to be kept in order. They covered the land with strong and high castles, which were simply nests of robbers; and one hundred and twenty-six were built during this unhappy reign.

6. The Miseries of England.—The barons filled these castles with armed men. They made war against each other; and they not only attacked each other's castles, but they laid waste each other's lands, and burned down the houses of the labourers and the farmers. The farmers gave up ploughing: "it was useless," they said; "they might as well plough the sea." Even the highroads were unsafe. A traveller would fly into the woods if he spied a stranger at a distance on the road; and the sight of two or three horsemen would send the whole population of a country town scurrying into their houses to hide in their cellars. The barons not only burned down

cottages and farmhouses; they sacked villages and towns. They kidnapped rich people and carried off merchants; threw them into deep, damp, dark, and bitterly cold dungeons in their castles; and did not release them till they had paid large sums of money as ransom. If they thought a man was concealing his wealth, they tortured him until at length he confessed where his money was hidden. "They hanged up men," says the Saxon Chronicle, "by their feet and smoked them with foul smoke. Some were hanged up by their thumbs, others by the head; and burning things were put under their feet. They put knotted strings about men's heads, and twisted them till they went to the brain. Some they put into a chest, short and narrow, but not deep, and that had sharp stones inside, and forced men into them, so that they broke their limbs. Many thousands they starved with hunger. . . . Never yet was there such misery in the land; never did the heathen men worse than these Christian barons. Christ slept and all His saints." Corn, cheese, and butter grew so dear that few could buy them, for the land was not tilled. Very few were rich enough to purchase a comfortable dinner. And, as the outcome of all these disorders, famine raged throughout the land; and in the train of famine came—as they always do—fevers, plague, and every kind of disease.

claim'-ant, one who claims or demands something as his own.
mis'-er-y, wretchedness.
vast, very great.
fa'-vour-ite, one much loved.
off'-ered, proposed to give.
cre-at'-ed, made.
liege (pronounced *leege*), faithful.

lay waste, to make a desert.
spy, to see from a distance.
sack, to plunder; to ravage.
kid'-nap, to steal men or women.
re-lease', to set free.
con-veal'-ing, hiding.
pur'-chase, to buy.
dis-or'-der, want of order.

Channel, the English Channel; the arm of the sea which divides France from England.

37.—STEPHEN OR MATILDA—II.

1135-1154.—*Stephen reigned 19 years; Matilda, 8 months.*

1. The Reign of Matilda.—This queen and empress passed a very unhappy life in England. Her reign, if reign it can be called, lasted for only eight months. This short and uneasy reign began when Stephen was taken prisoner at the siege of Lincoln Castle, and sent off to Bristol in chains. In the course of the war, however, the Earl of Gloucester was also taken prisoner; and after some parleys, he and King Stephen were exchanged for each other. The war now broke out more hotly than before; and for fourteen years it went on between these two royal persons, while fire and sword raged over all the land.

2 The Adventures of Matilda.—At one time Matilda was shut up in the Castle at Oxford, and there was great fear that Stephen and his army would break in. It was winter-time—a hard and bitter winter; and the snow lay deep upon the ground. The queen's only chance of escape was to dress herself all in white, and try to slip through the guards that were posted round the city. Accordingly, she and another lady and one knight—all in white robes—stole out at a little postern-gate, crossed the castle-moat upon the ice, escaped the notice of the guards, and walked across the frozen Thames to Abingdon, where they found horses. They then rode on westward, until they met the Earl of Gloucester, who had brought over the boy Henry Plantagenet, the son of Matilda, from France. Henry, who was afterwards Henry the Second, was at this time a child only twelve years old. At another time Matilda was hemmed in on all sides by her

enemies at Devizes, a small town in Wiltshire, and had to be carried out of the town in a coffin—the sides of which were pierced with holes, so that she might have air to



The Escape of Matilda.

breathe. At length the Earl of Gloucester died ; and Matilda, who knew she could do nothing without him, gave up the struggle, and went away back to Normandy.

3. Prince Henry is sent to Scotland.—The young Henry lived mostly at Bristol, in the charge and under the care of his uncle, the Earl of Gloucester. When he reached the age of eighteen, his mother thought it time that he should be knighted. She accordingly sent him to Scotland, to his grand-uncle David, who was king of that country. When a young man was made a knight, he knelt at the altar of his patron saint, and took an oath that he would always speak the truth, that he would do nothing that was unfair, that he would never fight in an evil cause, that he would protect women and all weak persons, and that he would always be ready to shed his blood for the cause of God, his king, and the Church. Then he was girt with a sword, a pair of gilt spurs was fastened on his heels, he knelt down again, and the king or some brave old knight struck the lad on the shoulder with the flat of his sword, and said, “ Rise, Sir Knight, in the name of God ! ”

4. The Agreement.—Henry, though only eighteen, now thought of beginning a fresh war with Stephen. But the clergy, who of all men knew best what fearful miseries and misfortunes the country had suffered from war, stepped in and brought about a peace between them. It was agreed that Stephen should be king as long as he lived, and that Henry should ascend the throne after his death. In less than a year after this peaceful settlement, Stephen died at Dover, and Henry was called from Normandy to take upon his head the crown of England. Being the son of the great Count of Anjou, he was called

an Angevin¹; and he was the first of the Angevin kings. His father was a Frenchman, his mother a Norman.

par'-ley, a speaking together.

ex-change', to give one thing for another.

robes, long and flowing dress

pa'-tron, a protector.

as-cend', to go up.

Moat. The Norman castles were surrounded by high walls, outside which was a broad and deep ditch filled with water. This was called the moat. The moats at Windsor Castle and the Tower have been converted into pretty gardens.

Postern-gate meant first a back-gate; then any small private gate.

38.—THE BATTLE OF THE STANDARD.

1138.

1. Who David was.—The Scottish king who fought the Battle of the Standard was David I. of Scotland, called afterwards for his great piety St David. He was the youngest of the six sons of Malcolm Canmore—that is, Malcolm Big-Head. He had married an English princess, Margaret, commonly called St Margaret for her goodness—who was a sister of Edgar the Atheling,—the young English prince who submitted to William the Conqueror. David had sworn to Henry I. that he would uphold the rights of Matilda to the crown of England; and he therefore marched an army southwards in support of these rights. He, in fact, invaded England three times; and the campaign we are going to read about was the second of these invasions.

2. David's Troops.—The troops of the Scottish army were of three kinds: Highlanders and the men of Gallogway, both of whom were wild, and even savage, Celts;

¹ Pronounced Ong'-jě-vang.

Borderers, who were probably Saxons; and a number of Norman knights, who had gone up to and settled in Scotland. The men of Galloway, Picts by race, were fierce, wild, bloodthirsty, and cruel; the Highlanders were not much better; but the Normans were just as civilised as their kinsmen who lived in England.

3. The Preparations of the English.—Thurstan, the Archbishop of York, on the first news of the danger, sent swift messengers through the north of England, called to his side baron and freeman—Englishman and Norman, and marched to meet the enemy. The meeting took place at Northallerton, in the north of Yorkshire. The English mounted a pole—stout and high like a tall mast—upon a four-wheeled waggon; and on the top of this mast were hung the sacred banners of St Cuthbert of Durham, St Peter of York, St John of Beverley, and St Wilfred of Ripon. Above these banners was placed a silver casket, in which was the sacred wafer blessed by the archbishop. It was from this sacred standard that the battle took its name. The standard was posted in the centre of the English army, which was drawn up in a close-set ring of knights and men-at-arms around it—a ring of steel armour and steady courage, bristling with heavy battle-axe, spear, lance, and sword.

4. The Order of Attack.—In the Scottish army, the wild men of Galloway were eager to lead the van and to begin the attack. But David had more trust in the disciplined valour of his armoured knights and his trained men-at-arms than in the fiery onset of these savage hill-men. The Earl of Strathearn was angry at the slowness and hesitation of David. “Why so much confidence in plates of steel or in rings of iron?” he cried. “I who wear no armour will go as far to-morrow with a bare

breast as any man who wears a steel plate." "Rude earl!" replied Allan de Percy, a Norman knight, "you brag of what you dare not do!" However, after much wild and angry talk, the king was at length forced to let the men of Galloway have their way and lead the attack.

5. The Defence.—The English stood ready round the high and sacred standard, in one firm, alert, brave, and compact body. The knights sat quietly on horseback,



The Battle of the Standard.

with gathered reins, lances in rest, steady eyes, and firm-knit brows; the bowmen of Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire, each with a "mighty bow" and a sheaf of arrows a good cloth-yard long,—each with his bow of yew ready strung, and his long arrow pointed at the foe. A bishop mounted the carriage of the standard, told the army that the war was a holy war, and that those who

fell on the field should at once pass into Paradise. An aged Norman baron also mounted and spoke to the soldiers around him. "I swear," he cried, grasping the hand of the Earl of Albemarle,—“I swear that on this day I will overcome the Scots, or die upon the field!” “So swear we all!” shouted the steel-clad barons and the brave knights who were mustered around him.

6. The Battle.—The armies were by this time close to each other, and the men of Galloway dashed headlong on the English ranks, with shouts and cries of “Albyn! Albyn!” that sounded over the field like the roar of a furious tempest. For two hours they fought with terrible fury, and made such slaughter among the English spearmen that they began to waver and give way. But the archers brought help; for they drew their long shafts to the head, and sent shower upon shower of arrows so thick upon the wild, half-clad Galloway men, that, fighting as they did with bared breasts, they fell in large numbers, having nothing to turn aside the deadly shafts. This blinding and bloody flight of arrows made them stop, hesitate, look round for aid, give way, and at length turn and flee. Prince Henry of Scotland advanced to their support with his men-at-arms. He rushed at full gallop on the English line, and broke through it, says a writer, “as if it had been a spider’s web.” He then galloped on, and, turning, attacked the rear of the English; while the men of Galloway rallied, returned to the fight, and were about to renew the contest.

7. The Check.—At this moment—a moment when victory might lean either to the one side or to the other—an English soldier lifted his spear on high with the head of a slain man fixed upon it, and shouted with all his might, “This is the head of the King of the Scots!” The

cry ran through the Scottish ranks. They believed the falsehood, stopped, reeled, and fled. The men of Galloway flung away their arms; the Borderers and the men of the Lothians at once stopped fighting and stood still. The king wrenched his helmet from his head, flung it from him, seized the standard of the dragon, and rode bareheaded among his chosen men, shouting that he still lived, and that they must follow him. But it was too late. The alarm and the panic had gone through the whole army, and the word of a single man could not give it stop or stay. The Scottish nobles saw that the day was lost, gathered round their king, and forced him to retreat.

8. The Retreat.—Many of the retreating Scots, however, kept their senses, crowded round the royal standard, made a guard for their king, and fought their way out in good order. They made their way to Carlisle, which at that time belonged to King David, not as King of Scotland, but as Earl of Cumberland. Thus it was that the Scots lost a battle, which, if they had won, must have given them a great part of England, and, it may be, the whole of that kingdom, torn as it was in this double reign with civil war. However this might have been, the southern boundary of Scotland, had David won this battle, would most probably have been the Humber or the Tees, and not the Tweed.

SIR WALTER SCOTT (*abridged*).

van, the front of an army or fleet.

dis-cip-lined, well-trained.

val'-our, bravery.

con'-fi-dence, firm trust.

mus'-tered, gathered in order.

wa'-ver, to shake; to move unsteadily.

hes'-i-tate, to doubt or waver in making up one's mind.

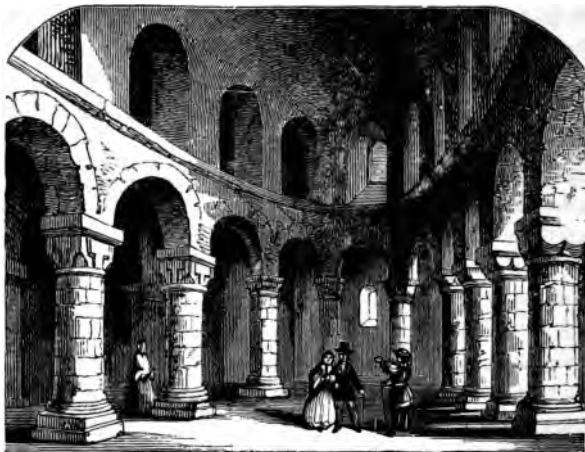
ad-vanced', came forward.

ral'-ly, to gather together again; to recover from confusion.

con'-test, struggle; fight.

39.—NORMAN LIFE AND CUSTOMS.—I.

1. **Houses.**—The Normans were much better builders of houses and of churches than the English were; and their buildings were stronger, larger, and constructed with better taste. The relation of the Norman to the English-



White Chapel, Tower of London : Norman Architecture.

man was that of the conqueror to the conquered; it was a relation of war. Hence, society in England, with Norman and Englishman standing face to face with each other, was based upon war. And thus it came about that the house of the Norman was not a cottage or a small building—it was in reality a castle. There was first of all a strong and high square tower in the middle, which was called the **keep**. The walls of this keep were sometimes as much as ten feet thick. Round the keep was built a wall about twelve feet high, with towers at

each corner ; and round the whole of the castle was dug a deep **moat**, which was generally filled with water. Over this moat was a **drawbridge**, which could be raised at the signal of the approach of an enemy. The chief gate was defended by a double tower. Outside the drawbridge there often stood another single or double tower, to defend it : this tower was called the **barbican**. The fighting men, the servants, and the people attached to the Norman lord, lived in the out-houses, which stood within the castle grounds.

2. Furniture.—The furniture of the Norman lord was plain and solid. It was not till England had become more settled and very rich that fine furniture came into use. In the chief room of the castle stood a strong and thick oak table. Round it were long coarse benches, also of oak, without backs. In the bedrooms stood rude bedsteads of oak or of deal, with coarse sheeting and coverlets ; but the larger number of the people slept on straw, and covered themselves with sheepskins. The floor of the hall was strewn with rushes in the winter, and with grass or green branches in the summer time. The Englishman called what he sat upon a *stool* ; the Norman put his feet upon it ; and hence both the thing and the name sank to a lower place. The Norman called what *he* sat upon a *chair*—a word which is the Norman form of the French word *chaise*.

3. Food.—The Normans were much less coarse, much more refined, in their way of eating than the English or Saxons. Their cooking was also better and more careful ; just as the cooking of the French in the present day is much more careful and neat than that of the English. The peacock was a favourite dish ; a roast-swan was brought up on high-days and holidays ; and a boar's head was a dish "to

set before a king." The two chief meals were dinner and supper—dinner, which was taken at nine in the morning, and supper at four in the afternoon. The poorer classes—and this soon came to mean just the *English*, in opposition to the Normans—never had any butcher's-meat of any kind, unless, perhaps, now and then a little bacon. Hence it comes that the names of all cooked meats are *French* names; while the names of the animals from which the meat came—of the animals when alive—are always *English*. Thus we have the Norman *beef* and the English *ox*; the Norman *mutton* and the English *sheep*; *veal* and *calf*; *pork* and *pig*; *pullet* and *chicken*—the first of these pairs being always Norman-French, and the last English. They changed their old names when "they were carried to the castle-hall to feast among the nobles." The word *bacon* is a purely English word; and the food is also English.

4. Dress.—The most usual dress was a short tunic, with a cape; and tight trousers fitting close to the leg. The most vivid colours were preferred—yellow, blue, green, and red. The young "gallant" or dandy of the time was a very remarkable person. A loose doublet, girt with a belt which had bars and ornaments of gold, reached nearly to the knee; and over this was a splendid cloak, edged with fur and trimmed with broad bars of gold lace. But his shoes were the most wonderful things. These shoes had very long points, which were stuffed with tow; the points were twisted like horns, and were sometimes so long that they had to be held up by gold or silver chains fastened to the knees. The hat or rather bonnet was of fur or of velvet. The Normans, on their first coming to England, wore their hair very short, and had their faces close shaven; but they soon began to copy the Saxon custom of long flowing hair,—and to such an extent was this

carried, that the Norman priests scolded the nobles from their pulpits and called them "filthy goats."

con-struct'-ed, put together; built.
re-la'-tion, way in which people are
 connected or joined together.
sig'-nal, a sign to give notice of some-
 thing.

strewn, spread.
re-fined', polished; elegant.
viv'-id, bright; striking.
dan'-dy, one who pays much atten-
 tion to dress.

40.—NORMAN LIFE AND CUSTOMS.—II.

1. Sports.—The chief sport of the Norman nobles among themselves was the Tournament. It was a mock fight, but sometimes a very serious fight, between two or more knights on horseback. A space of ground was enclosed, called the lists; and at each end of these lists stood the tents of the knights who were to fight with each other. The ladies and the other nobles sat in raised galleries; and high above all, on a throne, sat the "Queen of Beauty." A trumpet sounded; and the two knights dashed at each other at full gallop. Generally, their lances and swords were blunted; but in some cases the same arms as those used in war were employed. Sometimes one of the knights was unhorsed; sometimes his lance was shattered into splinters; at other times the lance was run through the neck of the unhappy knight who was worsted. After the tilting, and when the Queen of Beauty had presented the successful knight—the noble who had met and overthrown all comers—with a flower, the lower classes went to their sports. These were archery, quarter-staff, and bull-baiting. The quarter-staff was the favourite sport of the English, who have always been fond of seeing personal courage, great strength, and the taking of hard

blows with a cheerful countenance. The Norman nobles and their ladies were also very fond of hunting and hawking.

2. Weapons.—The lance and the sword were the chief weapons of the Norman knight. The sword was very often two-handed. The knight also carried a dagger, with which he used to give the “stroke of mercy” to those who were so badly wounded that they could not possibly recover. The shield was of the shape of a kite : whereas the English shield was generally round or oval. The shirt of mail was made of rings : it was not till the fourteenth century that they were composed of plates. The helmet was usually shaped somewhat like a sugar-loaf.

3. Trade.—The Norman conquest was of the greatest benefit both to the trade and to the commerce of England. In the time of William I. a number of weavers came over from Flanders and settled in the north of England ; and this was the beginning of the rich and important trade in wool that has existed for so long a time in England. The spinning and weaving of linen, dyeing, and goldsmith’s work, were also greatly encouraged.

4. Commerce.—The coming of the seafaring Danes, many of whom settled in the city of London, had already made of that city a thriving and busy port. Bristol had also a very thriving trade with Ireland and Norway ; and Exeter made large exports of minerals. The chief exports of England in the early Norman times were wools, hides, tin, and lead ; the chief imports, wines, spices, drugs, and silks. The internal or home trade of the country was carried on at markets and fairs. The fairs were at first only saints’ days or holy days, and business was not done on such days ; but as time went on, buying and selling began to be practised on them. These fairs were often held in the churchyard. By-and-by they were removed

to some large open space in the heart of the town ; and a cross was set up, "to remind men that in becoming traders they did not cease to be Christians." This is the origin or beginning of the "market-cross."

5. Agriculture. — The Norman nobles, and also the Norman monks, were fond of the country, looked well after the land, and saw that it was thoroughly tilled and well drained. A Norman called Richard de Rulos, lord of Brunne, embanked the river Welland, drained a large breadth of country, burned down the brushwood and weeds, planted orchards, made pastures and meadows, and so changed the face of the district that it was called "a garden of delights." Still, the right way of making the best of the land was not well understood over the whole of the country ; and now and then, the crops having failed, severe famines, followed by fevers, killed off thousands of poor people.

6. Literature. — The Normans brought in French books and French songs. There was not a single book written in our English tongue from the year 1066 to the year 1205 —except the Saxon Chronicle ; and that came to an end in the year 1154, the year of the death of Stephen. This chronicle was a short account of what went on in England —and of the things that happened ; and it was written chiefly by Saxon—that is, English monks. The Normans were very fond of songs ; and it is to them we owe the use of rhyme in poetry.

en-closed', shut in.

shiv'-ered, broken into small pieces
by great force.

splint'-ers, small pieces split off.

worst'-ed, defeated.

re-cov'-er, get well again.

min'-er-al, anything dug out of a

mine.

prac'-tise, to do regularly.

em-bank', to make banks on each side
of.

de-light', that which gives great pleas-
ure.

se-vere', very sore.

CHIEF DATES.

ROMAN TIMES.

| | | |
|---|-------|---------|
| Julius Cæsar's First Invasion of Britain, | . . . | B.C. 55 |
| Julius Cæsar's Second Invasion, | . . . | 54 |
| The Romans, under Claudius, invade Britain, | . . . | A.D. 43 |
| The Romans leave Britain, | . . . | 401 |

OLD-ENGLISH TIMES.

| | | |
|--|-------|-----------|
| The English (Angles, Saxons, and Jutes) first settle in Britain, | . . . | A.D. 400 |
| Christianity introduced by Augustine, | . . . | 597 |
| Egbert becomes King of the English, | . . . | 827 |
| Reign of Alfred the Great, | . . . | 871-901 |
| The Danish Kings, | . . . | 1017-1042 |
| Battle of Hastings.—The Norman Conquest of England, | . . . | 1066 |

NORMAN TIMES.

| | | |
|---|-------|----------------|
| Reign of William I., <i>The Conqueror</i> , | . . . | A.D. 1066-1087 |
| Reign of William II., <i>Rufus</i> , | . . . | 1087-1100 |
| Reign of Henry I., <i>Beauclerc</i> , | . . . | 1100-1135 |
| Henry defeats Robert at Tenchebray.—The English Conquest of Normandy, | . . . | 1106 |
| Loss of the White Ship, | . . . | 1120 |
| Reign of Stephen (or Matilda), | . . . | 1135-1154 |
| Battle of the Standard, | . . . | 1138 |

THE NORMAN KINGS.

| | | |
|-------------------------|---------|-------------------|
| William I. reigned from | . . . | A.D. 1066 to 1087 |
| William II. | „ . . . | 1087 „ 1100 |
| Henry I. | „ . . . | 1100 „ 1135 |
| Stephen | „ . . . | 1135 „ 1154 |

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